NOT GUILTY

ROBERT BLATCHFORD

August Vollmer
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A DEFENCE OF THE BOTTOM DOG

BY ROBERT BLATCHFORD

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Dedicated to my Old
Friend & Fellow Worker
W. T. WILKINSON

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The Author's Apology

THIS is not a stiff and learned work, written by a professor for professors, but a human book, written in humanity's behalf by a man, for men and women.

I shall not fret you with strange and stilted language, nor weary you with tedious and irksome science, nor gall you with far-fetched theories, nor waste your time in any vain word-twisting nor splitting of hairs.

A plain-dealing man, speaking frankly and simply to honest and plain-dealing readers, I shall trust to common sense and common knowledge and common English to make my meaning clear.

I have been warned that it is easier to write a book on such a theme as this than to get people to read it when written. But I am hopeful, and my hope springs from the living interest and deep significance of the subject.

For in defending the Bottom Dog I do not deal with hard science only; but with the dearest faiths, the oldest wrongs, and the most awful relationships of the great human family, for whose good I strive, and to whose judgment I appeal.

Knowing, as I do, how the hard-working and hard-playing public shun laborious thinking and serious writing, and how they hate to have their ease disturbed or their prejudices handled rudely, I still make bold to undertake this task, because of the vital nature of the problems I shall probe.

The case for the Bottom Dog should touch the public heart to the quick, for it affects the truth of our religions, the justice of our laws, and the destinies of our children and our children's children.

Much golden eloquence has been squandered in praise of the successful and the good; much stern condemnation has been vented upon the wicked. I venture now to plead for those of our poor brothers and sisters who are accursed of Christ and rejected of men.

Hitherto all the love, all the honours, all the applause of this world, and all the rewards of heaven, have been lavished on the fortunate and the strong; and the portion of the unfriended Bottom Dog, in his adversity and weakness, has been curses, blows, chains, the gallows, and everlasting damnation.

I shall plead, then, for those who are loathed and tortured and branded as the sinful and unclean; for those who have hated us and wronged us, and have been wronged and hated by us. I shall defend them for right's sake, for pity's sake, and for the benefit of

society and the race. For these also are of our flesh, these also have erred and gone astray, these also are victims of an inscrutable and relentless Fate.

If it concerns us that the religions of the world are childish dreams, or nightmares; if it concerns us that our penal laws and moral codes are survivals of barbarism and fear; if it concerns us that our most cherished and venerable ideas of our relations to God and to each other are illogical and savage, then the case for the Bottom Dog concerns us nearly.

If it moves us to learn that disease may be prevented, that ruin may be averted, that broken hearts and broken lives may be made whole; if it inspires us to hear how beauty may be conjured out of loathliness and glory out of shame; how waste may be turned to wealth and death to life, and despair to happiness, then the case for the Bottom Dog is a case to be well and truly tried.

If man's flesh and woman's flesh are merchandise or carrion; if the defiled and trampled souls of innocent children are no more to us than are the trodden blossoms under the feet of swine; if love lies to us and pity is a cheat; if whips and chains and contumely and the gibbet are meet for our sisters and our brothers and if dishonourable ease and beggarly pride and the flatteries of fools are worthy of ourselves, then we have the Yellow Press and the painted altar and the Parliamentary speeches and a selfish heaven and a hell where the worm never dies; and everything is for the best in this best of all possible worlds: amen.

But because I believe "men needs must love the highest when they see it," because I believe that the universal heart is sweet and sound, because I believe there are many who honour truth and seek happiness and peace for all, I do not fear to plead for the Bottom Dog, nor to ask a patient hearing.

Rightly or wrongly, happily or unhappily, but with all the sincerity of my soul, I shall here deny the justice and reason of every kind of blame and praise, of punishment and reward—human or divine.

Divine law—the law made by priests, and attributed to God—consists of a code of rewards and punishments for acts called good or bad. Human law—the law made by Kings and Parliaments—consists of a code of punishments for acts called criminal and unlawful.

I claim that men should not be classified as good and bad, but as fortunate and unfortunate; that they should be pitied, and not blamed; helped instead of being punished.

I claim that since we do not hold a man worthy of praise for

being born beautiful, nor of blame for being born ugly, neither should we hold him worthy of praise for being born virtuous, nor of blame for being born vicious.

I base this claim upon the self-evident and undeniable fact that man has no part in the creation of his own nature.

I shall be told this means that no man is answerable for his own acts.

That is exactly what it does mean.

But, it will be urged, every man has a free will to act as he chooses; and to deny that is to imperil all law and order, all morality and discipline.

I deny both these inferences, and I ask the reader to hear my case patiently, and to judge it on its merits.

Let us first test the justice of our laws, divine and human: the question of their usefulness we will deal with later.

CHAPTER ONE
THE LAWS OF GOD

DIVINE law says that certain acts are good, and that certain acts are evil; and that God will reward those who do well, and will punish those who do ill. And we are told that God will so act because God is *just.*

But I claim that God *cannot* justly punish those who disobey, nor reward those who obey His laws.

Religious people tell us that God is "The Great First Cause": that God created *all* things—mankind, the universe, nature and all her laws.

Who is answerable for a thing that is caused: he who causes it, or he who does not cause it?

He who causes it is answerable. And God is "The First Great Cause" of *all* things. And the cause of all things is answerable for all things.

If God created *all* things He must have created the evil as well as the good.

Who, then, is responsible for good and evil? Only God, for He made them.

He who creates all is responsible for all. God created all: God is responsible for all.

He who creates nothing is responsible for nothing. Man created nothing: man is responsible for nothing.

Therefore man is not responsible for his nature, nor for the acts prompted by that nature.

Therefore God cannot justly punish man for his acts.

Therefore the Divine law, with its code of rewards and punishments, is not a just law, and cannot have emanated from a just God.

Therefore the Christian religion is built upon a foundation of error, and there are no such things as God's wrath, God's pardon; heaven or hell.

That argument has never been answered. But attempts have been made to evade it, and the plea most commonly put forward

has been so gracefully expressed by Mr. G. K. Chesterton that I will quote it in his own words:

> Now, the question round which this controversy has circled for ages is simply this: Clearly God can, in the exercise of His omnipotence, give part of Himself to His creatures; can give His strength to the bull, or His beauty to the lily. Could God possibly, in the exercise of His omnipotence, give to one of His creatures some portion of that other quality of His—His originating power, His power of primal invention, this making things from nothing or Himself? If God can do all things, can He not make man free? Can He not give man the power to create actions as God creates stars? He can give His force; can He give a little of his sovereignty? Can He, in short, create a kind of little God—an "imago Dei?"

The answer to that quaint piece of reasoning is that it begs the question. For I do not say that God cannot give to man any power He chooses; but that God is responsible, and man is not responsible, for the nature and the acts of any power by God bestowed.

If man did not invent, nor create himself; if man did not create "the power" bestowed upon him by God; if man did not bestow that power upon himself, how can man be responsible for the power or for its acts?

God not only created man; He created the material of which man was made, and the laws of the universe into which man was introduced.

God is the "First Great Cause": He created all things: the evil and the good. How can God blame man for the effects of which God is the cause?

For the defeat of all Christian apologists it is not necessary for me to add another word; the argument is invincible as it stands. But for the reader's sake it may be as well to deal rather more fully with what may be to him a new and startling idea. Let us then return to Mr. Chesterton's plea.

God is said to give to man a "power": a power which, Mr. Chesterton says, God "made out of Himself." And this power will create thoughts, will create actions as God creates stars.

But we see that man cannot create the thoughts nor cause the actions until God gives him the "power." Then it is the "power" that creates the thoughts or acts. Then it is not man, but the "power"—the power God made out of Himself and bestowed upon man—that creates the thoughts or acts. Then the "power" is a kind of lord or ruler made by God, and put by God over man, as a rider is placed upon a horse, or a pilot on a ship. Then man

is no more responsible for the acts or the thoughts of this ruling power than a horse is responsible for the acts of a jockey, or a ship for the acts of a pilot.

In fact, the "power" given by God to man is only another name for the "will of God," or the "power of God"; and if man's acts are ruled, or created, by the will or power of God, how can God justly punish man for those acts?

If God created man as well as this imaginary "power" which God is said to give to man, God is responsible for the acts of both.

It is claimed by others that man is responsible to God for his acts because God gave him "reason," or because God gave him a "conscience," or because God gave him a "will" to choose.

But these words, "conscience," "reason," and "will," are only other names for Mr. Chesterton's imaginary "power."

Let us be careful to keep our thoughts quite clear and unentangled. If we speak of "will," or "power," or "reason," as a thing "given to man," we imply that "will," or "power," is a thing *outside* of man, and not a part of him.

Having failed to saddle man with responsibility for himself, our opponents would now make him responsible for some "power" outside himself. The simple answer is that man made neither himself nor his powers, and that God made man and the power given to man; therefore God and not man is responsible.

Conscience and reason and the "power" are rulers or guides given to man by God. God made these guides or rulers.

These guides must be true guides, or false guides: they must be good or bad.

God is all-knowing, as well as all-powerful. Not only has He power to create at will a true guide or a false guide, but He *knows* when He creates a guide, and when He bestows that guide upon man, whether it will be a true or a false guide. Therefore, when God created the reason or the conscience and gave it to man, He *knew* whether the reason or the conscience would guide man right or wrong. If the power made and bestowed by God leads man wrongly, it is leading man as God *willed* and *knew* it would lead him. How, then, can God justly blame man for the acts that reason or power "creates"?

God creates a number of good propensities, and a number of evil propensities, packs them up in a bundle and calls them "man." Is the skinful of propensities created and put together by God responsible for the proportion of good and evil powers it comprises?

But then Mr. Chesterton suggests that God puts over the bun-

dle a "power" of control. That power controls man for evil: as God must have known it would. Is the bundle of God's making responsible for the failure of the power God made and sent to manage it? God must have known when He created and put the "power" in control that it would fail.

Tell me now, some wise philosopher, or great divine, or learned logician, which is the *man?* Is it the good propensities, or the evil propensities, or the power of control? And tell me how can any one or all of these be responsible to the God who invented them, who created them, who joined them together; who made and united them, knowing they would fail?

Here is a grand conception of an "all-wise," "all-powerful," perfectly "just" God, who creates a man whom He knows *must* do evil, gives him a guide who cannot make him do well, issues commands for him to act as God has made it impossible for him to act, and finally punishes him for failing to do what God knew from the first he was incapable of doing.

And the world is paying millions of money, and bestowing honours and rewards in profusion upon the learned and wise and spiritual leaders who teach it to believe such illogical nonsense as the above.

When we turn from the old idea of instantaneous creation to the new idea of evolution, the theories about "God's mercy" and "God's wrath" are still more impossible and absurd.

For now we are to believe that God, the "First Great Cause," "in the beginning" created not man and beast, and forest and sea, and hill and plain, but "matter," and "force," and "law."

Out of the matter and force God made, working to the law God made, there slowly developed the nebulæ, the suns, the planets.

Out of the same matter and force, changed in form by the working of God's laws, there slowly developed the single-celled jelly-like creature from which, by the working of God's laws, all other forms of life have since evolved.

Out of matter and force, working to God's laws, man has been evolved.

Is there any step in the long march of evolution from the first creation of matter and force to the evolution of man, when the jelly speck, or the polyp, or the fish, or the reptile, or the beast, or the ape, or the man, had power to change, or to assist, or to resist the working of the laws God made?

Is there any step in the long march of evolution, any link in the long chain of cause and effect, when any one of the things

or beings evolved by law working on matter and force could by act or will of their own have developed otherwise than as they did?

Is it not plain that man has developed into that which he is by slow evolution of matter and force, through the operation of divine laws over which he had no more control than he now has over the revolution of the suns in their orbits?

How, then, can we believe that man is to blame for being that which he is?

Is there any quality of body or of mind that has not been *inevitably* evolved in man by the working of God's laws?

You are not going to tell me that I am answerable or blameable for the nature of matter and force, nor for the operations of God's laws, are you?

You will not suggest that I am responsible for the creation: so long ago, and I so new, so weak, so small!

God, when He created matter and force and law, knew the nature of matter and force, and the power and purpose of law. He knew that they must work as He had made and meant them to work. He knew that we *must* be as His agents *must* make us.

Will He punish or reward us, then, for the acts of His agents: the agents He made and controlled? Absurd.

But, it may be urged, "man has a soul." So! He got that soul from God. God made the soul and fixed its powers for good and evil.

It is the soul, then, that is responsible, is it? But the soul did not create itself, and can only act as God has ordained that it shall and must act.

If man is not to blame for his own acts he is not to blame for the acts of his soul; and for the same reason.

"Soul," or "man," "reason," or "conscience," responsibility lies with the causer, and not with the thing caused.

And God is "The First Great Cause," and how then can God justly punish any of His creatures for being as He created them?

It is impossible. It is unthinkable. But upon this unthinkable and impossible absurdity the whole code of divine laws is built.

Therefore the Christian religion is untrue, and man is not responsible to God for his nature nor for his acts.

CHAPTER TWO
THE LAWS OF MAN

COMMON law and common usage all the world over hold men answerable for their acts, and blame or punish them when those acts transgress the laws of custom.

Human law, like the divine law, is based upon the false idea that men know what is right and what is wrong, and have power to choose the right.

Human law, like divine law, classifies men as good and bad, and punishes them for doing "wrong."

But men should not be classified as good and bad, but as fortunate and unfortunate, as weak and strong.

And the unfortunate and weak should not be blamed, but pitied; should not be punished but helped.

The just and wise course is to look upon all wrong-doers as we look upon the ignorant, the diseased, the insane, and the deformed.

Many of our wrong-doers are ignorant, or diseased, or insane, or mentally deformed. But there are some who are base or savage by nature. These should be regarded as we regard base or savage animals: as creatures of a lower order, dangerous, but not deserving blame nor hatred. And this is the sound view, as I shall show, because these unhappy creatures are nearer to our brutish ancestors than other men, the ancient strain of man's bestial origin cropping out in them through no fault of their own.

Religion says man is the product of God; science says he is the product of "heredity" and "environment." The difference does not matter much to my case. The point is that man does not create himself, and so is not to blame for his nature, and, therefore, is not to blame for his acts.

For man did not help God in the act of his creation, nor did he choose his own ancestors.

"What! do you mean to say that the ruffian, the libertine, and the knave are not to be blamed nor punished for any of the vile and cruel acts they perpetrate?" asks "the average man."

Yes. That is what I mean. And that is not a new and star-

tling "craze," as many may suppose, but is a piece of very ancient wisdom; as old as the oldest thought of India and of Greece. In the *Bhagavad-gita* it is written:

> He sees truly who sees all actions to be done by nature alone, and likewise the self not the doer.

And Socrates said:

> It is an odd thing that if you had met a man ill-conditioned in body you would not have been angry; but to have met a man rudely disposed in mind provokes you.

Neither am I unsupported to-day in my heresies. Most theologists are opposed to me, but most men of science are with me: they look upon man as a creature of "heredity" and "environment."

What a man *does* depends upon what he *is;* and what he *is* depends upon his "breed" and his "experience."

We admit that no two men are quite alike. We should not expect men who are unlike in nature and in knowledge to do like acts. Where the causes are different it is folly to expect identical effects.

Every man is that which his forbears (his ancestors) and his experiences (his environment) have made him.

Every man's character is formed partly by "heredity" (breed, or descent) and partly by "environment" (experience, or surroundings). That is to say, his character depends partly upon the nature of his parents, and partly upon the nature of his experience.

He comes into the world just as his ancestors have made him. He did not choose his ancestors; he had nothing to do with the moulding of their natures. Every quality, good or bad, in his own nature, has been handed down to him by his forbears, without knowledge or consent.

How can we blame the new-born or unborn baby for the nature and arrangement of the cells—which are *he?*

Born into the world as he was made, he is a helpless infant, dependent upon his nurses and his teachers. He did not choose his nurses, nor his teachers; he cannot control their conduct towards him, nor test the truth nor virtue of the lessons he learns from them.

As he grows older the nature he inherited from his ancestors

is modified, for better or for worse, by the lessons and the treatment given to him by his nurses, his companions, and his teachers.

So, when he becomes a man he is that which his forbears and his fellow creatures have made him.

That is to say, he is the product of his heredity and his environment. He could not be otherwise.

How, then, can it be just to blame him for being that which he *must* be?

But, it may be objected, a man has power to change, or to conquer, his environment; to train, or to subdue, his original nature.

That depends upon the strength of his original nature (which his ancestors handed down to him) and of his environment—which consists, largely, of the actions of his fellow-creatures.

A man has power to do that which his forbears have made him able to do. He has power to do no more.

He has certain powers given him by his forbears, which may have been developed or repressed by his surroundings. With those powers, as modified by the influences surrounding and outside himself, he may do all that his nature desires and is able to do. Up to the limit of his inherited powers he may do all that his environment (his experiences) have taught or incited him to do.

To speak of a man conquering his environment is the same thing as to speak of a man swimming against a stream. He can swim against the stream if he has strength and skill to overcome the stream. His strength is his heredity: his skill is the result of his environment. If his strength and skill are more than equal to the force of the stream he will conquer his environment; if the stream is too strong for him he will be conquered by his environment.

His acts, in short, depend wholly upon his nature and his environment: neither of which is of his own choosing. Of this I will say more in its place.

A man gets his nature from his forbears, just as certainly as he gets the shape of his nose, the length of his foot, and the colour of his eyes from his forbears.

As we do not blame a man for being born with red or black hair, why should we blame him for being born with strong passions or base desires?

If it is foolish to blame a child for being born with a deformed or weak spine, how can it be reasonable to blame him for being born with a deformed or weak brain?

The nature and quality of his hair and his eyes, of his spine and

his brain, of his passions and desires, were all settled *for* and not *by* him before he drew the breath of life.

If we blame a man because he has inherited fickleness from an Italian grandfather, or praise him because he has inherited steadfastness from a Dutch grandmother, we are actually praising or blaming him because, before he was born, an Italian married a Hollander.

If we blame a man for inheriting cupidity from an ancestor who was greedy and rapacious, or for inheriting licentious inclinations from an ancestor who was a rake, we are blaming him for failing to be born of better parents.

Briefly, then, heredity makes, and environment modifies, a man's nature. And both these forces are *outside* the man.

Therefore man becomes that which he is by the action of forces outside himself. Therefore it is unjust to blame a man for being that which he is. Therefore it is unjust to blame him for doing that which he does.

Therefore our human laws, which punish men for their acts, are unjust laws.

Now, before we go fully into the meanings of the words "heredity" and "environment," let us make a short summary of the arguments above put forth.

Since man did not create his own nature, man is not responsible for his own acts.

Therefore all laws, human or divine, which punish man for his acts are unjust laws.

CHAPTER THREE
WHERE DO OUR NATURES COME FROM?

I HOPE the reader will not fight shy of heredity. I trust he will find it quite simple and interesting; and I promise him to use no unfamiliar words, nor to trouble him with difficult and tedious scientific expositions.

I deal with heredity before environment, because it is needful to take them one at a time, and heredity comes first; as birth before schooling.

But we must not fall into the bad habit of thinking of heredity and environment apart from each other, for it is *both,* and not either of them that make man's character.

It is often said that neither heredity nor environment accounts for a man's conduct. And that is true. But it is true, also, that heredity *and* environment account for every quality in the human "make-up." A pianist, an artist, or a cricketer is "made as well as born," and so is every man. A good batsman is a good batsman for two reasons: (1) He was born with good sight, steady nerves, and sound sense, all of which he owes to his ancestors. (2) He has been well taught, or has practised well, and this practice, this endeavour to succeed, he owes to his inherited ambition, and to the precept and example of other men. So if a man plays a fiddle well, or steers a ship well, or devotes his life to charity, the excellence is always due to heredity *and* environment. For the cricketer would never have been a cricketer, nor the violinist a violinist, had he been born in a country where cricket and violin playing were unknown. And, on the other hand, a man bred amongst cricketers or musicians will never excel in music nor in cricket unless he has what is called "a gift"; and the gift is "heredity."

Now, what do we mean by "heredity"?

Heredity is "descent," or "breed." Heredity, as the word is here used, means those qualities which are handed down from one generation to the next. It means those qualities which a new generation inherits from the generation from whom it descends. It

means all that "is bred in the bone." If a man inherits a Grecian nose, a violent temper, well-knit muscles, a love of excitement, or a good ear for music, from his father or mother, that quality or feature is part of his heredity. It is "bred in him."

Every quality a child possesses at the moment of birth, *every* quality of body or of mind, is inherited from his parents and their ancestors. And the whole of those qualities—which *are* the child—are what we call "heredity."

No child brings into the world one single quality of body or mind that has not been handed down to it by its ancestors.

And yet no two children are exactly alike, and no child is exactly like any one of its forbears.

This difference of children from each other and from the parent stock is called "variation."

Hundreds of books and papers have been written about "variation," and to read some of them one might suppose variation to be a very difficult subject. But it is quite simple, and will not give us any trouble at all. Let us see.

Why We Are Not All Alike

The cause of variation can be easily understood.

Variation is due to the fact that every child has two parents. If these two parents were exactly alike, and if their ancestors had been all exactly alike, their children would be exactly like each other and like their parents.

But the father and mother are of different families, of different natures, and perhaps of different races. And the ancestors of the father and mother—millions in number—were all different from each other in nature and in descent.

Now, since a child inherits some qualities from its father and some from its mother, it follows that if the father and mother are different from each other, the child must differ from both, and yet resemble both. For he will inherit from the father qualities which the mother has not inherited from her ancestors, and he will inherit from the mother qualities which the father did not inherit from his ancestors. So the child will resemble both parents, without being an exact copy of either. It "varies" from both parents by inheriting from each.

The child of a black and a white parent is what we call a half-caste: he is neither a negro nor a white man. The pup of a bull-dog and a terrier is neither a bull-dog nor a terrier; he is a bull-terrier.

But heredity goes farther than that, and variation is more complex than that.

We must not think of a man as inheriting from his father and mother only. He inherits from the parents of both his parents; and from thousands of ancestors before those. He inherits from men and women who died thousands of years before he was born. He inherits from the cave-man, from the tree-man, from the ape-man, from the ape, and from the beast before the ape.

The child in the womb begins as a cell, and develops through the stages of evolution, becoming an embryo worm, fish, quadruped, ape, and, finally, a human baby.

The child is born with the bodily and mental qualities inherited from many generations of beasts and many generations of men.

Any one of the many ancient qualities of mind or body may crop up again in a modern child. Children have been born with tails: children have been born with six nipples, like a dog, instead of with two, like a human being.

And now I will explain, simply and briefly, what we mean by the word "Atavism."

Why the Clock of Descent Sometimes Goes Backward

"Atavism," or "breeding back," or "reversion," may reach back through thousands of generations, and some trait of the cave-man, or the beast, may reappear in a child of Twentieth Century civilisation.

Darwin, in *The Descent of Man,* Chapter II, gives many instances of "atavism," or breeding back, by human beings to apish and even quadrupedal characteristics. Alluding to a case cited by Mr. J. Wood, in which a man had seven muscles "proper to certain apes," Darwin says:

> It is quite incredible that a man should through mere accident abnormally resemble certain apes in no less than seven of his muscles, if there had been no genetic connection between them. On the other hand, if man is descended from some ape-like creature, no valid reason can be assigned why certain muscles should not suddenly reappear after an interval of many thousand generations, in the same manner as with horses, asses, and mules, dark-coloured stripes suddenly reappear on the legs and shoulders after an interval of hundreds, or, more probably, of thousands of generations.

Dr. Lydston, in *The Diseases of Society* (Lippincott: 1904) says:

> The outcropping of ancestral types of mentality is observed to underlie many of the manifestations of vice and crime. These ancestral types or traits may revert farther back even than the savage progenitors of civilised man, and approximate those of the lower animals who, in their turn, stand behind the savage in the line of descent.

This "reversion to older and lower types," or "breeding back," is important, because it is the source of much crime—the origin of very many "Bottom Dogs," as we shall see. But at present we need only notice that heredity, or breed, reaches back through immense distances of time; so that a man inherits not only from savage ancestors, but also from the brutes. And man has no power to *choose* his breed, has no choice of ancestors, but must take the qualities of body and mind they hand down to him, be those qualities good or bad.

Descent, or breed, does not work regularly. Any trait of any ancestor, beast or man, near or remote, may crop up suddenly in any new generation. A child may bear little likeness to its father or mother: it may be more like its great-grandfather, its uncle, or its aunt.

It is as though every dead fore-parent back to the dimmest horizon of time, were liable to put a ghostly finger in the pie, to mend or mar it.

Let us now use a simple illustration of the workings of heredity, variation, and atavism, or breeding back.

There is no need to trouble ourselves with the scientific explanations. What we have to understand is that children inherit qualities from their ancestors; that children vary from their ancestors and from each other; and that old types or old qualities may crop out suddenly and unexpectedly in a new generation. Knowing, as we do, that children inherit from their parents and fore-parents, the rest may be made quite plain without a single scientific word.

The Mystery of Descent Made Easy

In our illustration we will take for parents and children bottles, and for hereditary qualities beads of different colours.

Now, take a bottle of red beads, and call it male. Take a bottle of blue beads, and call it female.

From each bottle take a portion of beads; mix them in a third bottle and call it "child."

We have now a child of a red father and a blue mother; and we find that this child is not all red, nor all blue, but part red and part blue.

It is like the father, for it has red beads; it is like the mother, for it has blue beads.

It is unlike the father, for the father has no blue, and it is unlike the mother, for the mother has no red.

Here we have a simple illustration of "heredity" and "variation."

Now, could we blame the "child" bottle for having red and blue beads in it; or could we blame the "child" bottle for having no yellow and no green beads in it?

But that is an example of a simple mixture of two ancestral strains. We have to do with mixtures of millions of strains.

Let us carry our illustration forward another generation.

Take our blue and red "child" and marry him to the child of a black bottle and a yellow bottle.

This gives us a marriage between Red-Blue and Black-Yellow.

The "child" bottle mixed from these two bottles of double colours will contain four colours.

He will "inherit" from grandfather Red and grandmother Blue, from grandfather Black and grandmother Yellow, and from father Red-Blue and mother Black-Yellow.

He will be like the six fore-parents, but different from each of them.

Can we blame this "child" bottle for being made up of red, blue, black, and yellow? Can we blame it for having no purple nor white beads in its composition? No. These colours were mixed *for* the child, and not *by* it.

How could there be white or purple beads in this bottle, when there were no white nor purple beads in the bottles from which it was filled?

But what of the variation amongst brothers and sisters?

That is easily understood. If the four colours in the ancestral bottles are evenly mixed, the grandchildren bottles will vary from their ancestors, but not from each other.

As we know that brothers and sisters do vary from each other, we must conclude that the hereditary qualities are *not* evenly mixed.

For the scientific explanation of this fact I must refer you to *The Germ Plasm,* by Weissmann.

For our purposes it is enough to know that brothers and sisters do vary from each other, and that they so vary because the ancestral qualties are not evenly distributed amongst the "sperms" and the "ova." On this head our own knowledge and observation do not leave any room for doubt.

It is as if in the case of our marriage of Red-Blue and Black-Yellow there were three child-bottles, of which one got more red and yellow, one more blue and red, and one more yellow and blue than the others. So that the three brother-bottles would differ from their fore-parents and from each other.

And as it would be foolish to blame the second bottle for having less red in it than the first, so it is foolish to blame a human child for having less intellect or less industry than his brothers.

If you refer to the masterly description of the impregnation of the ova given in Haeckel's great work, *The Evolution of Man,* you will find that the heredity of brothers is largely a matter of accident. See the plate and explanation on page 130 in the first volume.

The "variation" in brothers and sisters is like the variation in the mixing of beads in our bottles.

It is as though we made several tartan plaids of the same four colours, but in different patterns.

It is like dealing hands of cards from a shuffled pack. There are four suits, but one hand may be rich in clubs, another in diamonds.

And who in a game of whist would blame his partner for holding no trumps in his hand? The partner could only play the trumps dealt out to him.

In no way can a child control the pre-natal shuffling or dealing of the ancestral pack.

Now, as to atavism, or breeding back. In the ancestral bottles called men and women there are millions of different kinds of beads. And it sometimes happens that a particular kind of bead (or quality) which has lain dormant for a long time—perhaps for a thousand years—will crop up in a new mixing that goes to make a "child-bottle," and so that child may be less like its own parents than like some ancestor who has been dead and forgotten for centuries.

In the case of the man with the seven ape muscles, mentioned by Darwin, the breeding back must have reached millions of years.

This "lying doggo," or inactive, of some hereditary trait, may be

likened to the action of a kaleidoscope. We do not see all the fragments of coloured glass at every turn. But they are all there. We do not see the same pattern twice; yet the patterns are made almost of the same colours and the same pieces.

And now I think we have got a clear idea of the meanings of the words "heredity," "variation," and "atavism," and the most timid reader will not be afraid of them any more.

There is no need, for our purpose, to wrestle with severe science. The reader may find for himself all about "pangenesis" in Darwin, and about the "germ plasm" in Weissmann. Here we will not tax our memories with such weird words as "biophors," "gemmules," "ids," "idents," and "determinants." Our similes of beads, tartans, and cards will serve us well enough.

The only objection to our similes is that they are too simple. The mixture of bloods in descent is very much more extensive than our mixture of cards or beads.

If we trace a child's descent back only four generations we find that he has no less than thirty fore-parents belonging to sixteen different families. Another generation would reach thirty-two families. If we go back to twenty generations we find the number of families drawn upon to be over a million.

But Darwin speaks of "thousands of generations." Does not this suggest the wonderful possibilities of variation and atavism?

Imagine the variety of character and physique in a city like London. Then remember that each one of us is descended from more ancestors, and of much wider varieties, than all the population of London. And to hold a man answerable for his inheritance from those motley myriads of men and women is to hold him answerable for the natures and the actions of millions of human beings whom he never saw, of whom he never heard.

We all know that the different races of men differ from each other in colour, in features, and in capacity. We have only to think for a little of the Japanese, the Americans, the Spaniards, and the Swedes, to feel the full force of the term "racial characteristics."

We know that there is a great difference between the Irish and the Scotch. We know that there is a great difference between the Italians and the Dutch. We know the strongly marked peculiarities of the Jews and the Greeks.

Now, to blame a man for his nature is to blame him for not being like some other man. And how absurd it would be to blame a Norwegian for not being like a Jew, or a Gascon for not being like a Scot.

The Italians are wayward and impulsive: the Dutch are steadfast and cautious. Is it reasonable to blame the one for not being like the other?

If a child is born of an Italian father and an Irish mother, is it reasonable to expect that child to be as cool and methodical as the child of Dutch and Scottish parents?

Is it not the same with personal as with racial traits?

We have all heard of "Spanish pride," and of "Irish wit"; we have all heard of the pride of the Howards, and the genius of the Bachs.

To blame a Spaniard for being proud is to blame him for being born of Spanish parents. To blame a Howard for his pride is to blame him for being a son of the Howards.

Bach was a musical genius, Sheridan was witty, Nelson was brave, Rembrandt was a great painter, because there were golden beads in their ancestral bottles. But *they* did not put the golden beads there. They inherited them, as Lord Tomnoddy inherits his lands, his riches, and his plentiful lack of wit.

We should not expect the daughter of Carmen to be like the daughter of Jeannie Deans, nor the son of Rawdon Crawley to be like the son of Parson Adams. We should, indeed, no more think of praising a man for inheriting the genius or the virtues of his ancestors, than we should think of praising a man for inheriting his parents' wealth.

We have laughed over the Gilbertian satire on our patriotic boastfulness:

> For he himself has said it,
> And it's greatly to his credit,
> That he is an Englishman.
> He might have been a Rooshian,
> A Frenchman, Turk, or Prooshian,
> Or even Italian;
> But in spite of all temptations
> To belong to other nations,
> He remains an Englishman.

All of us can feel the point of those satirical lines; but some of us have yet to learn that a man can no more help being born "good" or "bad," "smart" or "dull," than he can help being born English, French, or Prooshian, or "even Italian."

Some of our ancestors conquered at Hastings, and some of them did not. Some of our ancestors held the pass at Thermopylæ, and others ran away at Bunker's Hill. Some were saints, and some were petty larcenists; some were philosophers, and some were

pirates; some were knights and some were savages; some were gentle ladies, some were apes, and some were hogs. And we inherit from them all.

We are all of us great-great-grandchildren of the beasts. We carry the bestial attributes in our blood: some more, some less. Who amongst us is so pure and exalted that he has never been conscious of the bestial taint? Who amongst us has not fought with wild beasts—not at Ephesus, but in his own heart?

Some of our ancestors wore tails! Is it strange that some of our descendants should have what Winwood Reade called "tailed minds"? The ghosts of old tragedies haunt the gloomy vestibules of many human minds. The Bottom Dog may often be possessed of ancestral devils.

He that is without inherited taint among us, let him cast the first stone.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE BEGINNINGS OF MORALS

WHAT do we mean by the words "sin," and "vice," and "crime"?

Sin is disobedience of the laws of God.

Crime is disobedience of the laws of men.

Vice is disobedience of the laws of nature.

I say that there is no such thing as a known law of God: that the so-called laws of God were made by men in God's name, and that therefore the word "sin" need trouble us no more. There is no such thing as sin.

I say that since there are bad laws as well as good laws, a crime may be a good instead of a bad act. For though it is wrong to disobey a good law, it may be right to disobey a bad law.

And now what do we mean by the words "good" and "bad," "moral" and "immoral"?

We call an act good when it "makes good"; when its effects are beneficial. We call an act bad when it "makes bad"; when its effects are injurious.

What are "morals"? My dictionary says, "the doctrine of man's moral duties *and social relations*"; and in Crabbe's Synonyms I find: "By an observance of good morals we *become good members of society.*"

The italics are mine. Morals are the standard of social conduct. All immoral conduct is anti-social, and all anti-social conduct is immoral.

If there were only one man in the world he could not act immorally, for there would be no other person whom his acts could injure or offend.

Where two persons live together either may act immorally, for he may so act as to injure or offend his companion.

Any act is immoral and wrong which needlessly injures a fellow creature. But no act is immoral or wrong which does not directly or indirectly inflict needless injury upon any fellow creature.

I say, "needless injury"; for it may sometimes be right and necessary to injure a fellow creature.

If it is wrong to inflict needless injury upon our fellows, it is right to defend our fellows and ourselves from the attacks of those who would needlessly injure us.

Any act which inflicts "needless" injury upon a fellow creature is immoral; but no act which does not inflict needless injury upon a fellow creature is immoral.

That is the root of my moral code. It may at first seem insufficient, but I think it will be found to reach high enough, wide enough, and deep enough to cover all true morality. For there is hardly any act a man can perform which does not affect a fellow creature.

For instance, if a man takes to drink, or neglects his health, he injures others as well as himself. For he becomes a less agreeable and a less useful member of society. He takes more from the common stock, and gives back less. He may even become an eyesore, or a danger, or a burden to his fellows. A cricketer who drank, or neglected to practise, would be acting as immorally towards the rest of the team as he would if he fielded carelessly or batted selfishly. Because, speaking morally, a man belongs not only to himself, but also to the whole human race.

Where Did Morals Come From?

Morals do not come by revelation, but by evolution. Morals are not based upon the commands of God, but upon the nature and the needs of man. Our churches attribute the origin of morals to the Bible. But the Egyptians and Babylons had moral codes before Moses was born or the Bible written. Thousands of years, tens of thousands of years, perhaps millions of years before Abraham, there were civilisations and moral codes.

Even before the coming of man there were the beginnings of morals in the animal world.

When I was a boy, we were taught that acts were right or wrong as they were pleasing or displeasing to the God of the Hebrew Bible.

There were two kinds of men—good men and bad men. The good men might expect to succeed in business here and go to heaven hereafter. The bad men were in peril of financial frosts in this world, and of penal fires in the world to come.

As I grew older and began to think for myself, I broke from that teaching, and at last came to see that all acts were wrong

which caused needless injury to others; that the best and happiest man was he who most earnestly devoted himself to making others happy; that all wrong-doing sprang from selfishness, and all well-doing from unselfishness; that all moral acts were social acts, and all immoral acts unsocial acts; and that therefore Socialism was good, and Individualism was evil.

But as to the beginning of the social virtues I was puzzled.

In most religions morality is supposed to have been established by divine revelation. Men did not know right from wrong until God gave them codes of laws ready-made; and even after men had the divine laws given to them they were by nature so depraved that they could only obey those laws by the special grace of God.

The idea that morality was slowly built up by evolution was first given to the world by Spencer and Darwin. It has since been elaborated by other writers, notably by Winwood Reade and Prince Kropotkin.

The notions of "the struggle for existence" and "the survival of the fittest" have been too commonly taken to mean that life in the animal world is one tragic series of ruthless single combats; that every man's hand always was and ever must be against the hand of every man, and every beast's tooth and claw against the tooth and claw of every beast.

But if we read Darwin's *Descent of Man* and Prince Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid Among Animals* and Winwood Reade's *Martyrdom of Man,* we shall find that the law of natural selection does not favour any such horrible conclusions.

Self-preservation may be the first law of nature; but it is not the last law of nature. In union is strength. The gregarious animals—those which live in communities of flocks and herds—as the apes, the deer, the rooks, the bees, the bison, the swallows, and the wolves, gain by mutual aid in the struggle for existence, for, by reason of their numbers and their union, they are better able to watch for the approach and to defeat the attacks of their enemies.

From this union and mutual aid of the gregarious animals arose the social instincts.

The sociable animals would doubtless be first drawn together partly for safety and partly for company.

Sheep, deer, buffalo, wild dogs, ants, rooks, and other social animals enjoy the companionship of their own kind. They play together, feed together, sleep together, hunt together, and help each other to evade or resist their common foes. They share in

social pleasures, and practise some of the social virtues.

And as the more sociable animals would be safest, and the less sociable animals most exposed to danger, natural selection would tend to raise the level of sociability, because the stock would be bred more from sociable than from unsociable animals.

The apes are social animals, and also imitative animals. The ape-like forbears of man would unite for safety and for society, and, being imitative, would observe and copy any invention or discovery due to lucky accident or to the sharper wits amongst their number.

Like the lower animals, they would play together, feed together, fight in companies, defend or rescue their young, and post sentinels to watch for the approach of danger.

Long before man had thought of any ghost or God, some rude form of order and morality would exist in the families and tribes of men, as some rude form of order and morality exists to-day amongst the wild elephants, the bees, the deer, and other creatures.

I once saw two horses fighting in a field. A third and older horse came up and parted them, and then drove them away in opposite directions. So in the earliest human tribes would the leaders prevent brawling and exact obedience.

Partly from such action, and partly from the training of the young, would be formed the habit of resenting and of punishing certain unsocial acts which the herd or tribe felt to be opposed to the general welfare.

One of the first faults man would brand as immoral would be cowardice. One of the earliest moral laws would, perhaps, resemble the Viking law that men who proved cowards in battle should be buried in the swamp under a hurdle.

Imitation, habit, natural selection, and the love of approbation, would all tend to fix and improve these crude customs, and from these simple beginnings would grow up laws and morals and conscience.

Very likely the earliest human groups were family groups, or clans. These clans would fight against other clans.

The next step may have been the union of clans into tribes, and the next the banding of tribes into nations.

At present men are mostly united as nations. Each nation has its own laws, its own morality, and its own patriotism, and the different nations are more or less hostile to each other; as formerly were the tribes or clans.

The final triumph will be the union of the nations in one brotherhood, and the abolition of war.

The red Indian does not think it immoral to murder an Indian of another tribe. The European does not think it immoral to kill thousands of men in battle. The evolution of morality has not yet carried us as far as universal peace. Nor has any revelation of God forbidden war.

We do not need to think long, nor to look far to see that different conditions have evolved different moral codes.

But all morals may be divided into two classes: True Morals and Artificial Morals.

True morals are all founded on the rule that it is wrong to cause needless injury to any fellow-creature.

Artificial morals are those morals invented by priests, kings, lawyers, poets, soldiers, and philosophers.

Moral codes made by rulers, or by ruling classes, are generally founded on expediency; and expediency, as understood by the rulers or the ruling classes, usually means those things that are expedient for themselves.

Now that which is expedient for a king, a tyrant, or an aristocracy may be far from expedient for the people over whom they rule. So we need not be surprised to find that many of the laws of barbarous and civilised nations are immoral laws. Our British game laws, land laws, poor laws, and very many of the criminal laws, and the laws relating to property, are immoral laws.

But there is no revelation of God condemning those laws. Nor does any European church oppose those laws, nor denounce them as immoral.

Then as to public opinion—our unwritten moral code—there is no clear and logical system of moral principles. For instance, the public think it a pity that men should be out of work, that women should starve, that little children should be sent to school unwashed and unfed. But the public do not think these things immoral. The fact is, the British people, after more than a thousand years of Christian teaching, do not know what true morality is. And how should they know, when their teachers in the church do not know?

The churches have always drawn their morality from the Bible, and have always tried to fit it in with the immoral codes made by kings, soldiers, landlords, money-lenders, and other immoral persons.

The Church has often pleaded for "charity" to the poor, but has never come to the rescue of the "Bottom Dog"; because the churches have never understood morality nor human nature.

It is science, and not the revelation of God, nor the teaching

of priests, that has enabled us to begin to understand human nature, and has made it possible to build up a systematic code of true morality.

As to what morality is, I claim it is the rule of social conduct: the measure of right conduct between man and man; and I shall build up my whole case upon the simple moral rule that "every act is immoral which needlessly injures any fellow-creature." This rule is only an old truth in a new form. It is, indeed, just a modern reading of the "Golden Rule." It is not the rule itself, but the use I shall put it to, that is likely to flutter certain moral dovecotes. As to the rule, the teachings of most great moralists, of all times and nations, go to prove it. As, for instance:

LAO TZE, a Chinese moralist, before Confucius, said: "The good I would meet with goodness, the not-good I would also meet with goodness."

CONFUCIUS, Chinese moralist, said: "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others."

He also said: "Benevolence is to be in one's most inward heart in sympathy with all things; to love all men; and to allow no selfish thoughts."

The same kind of teaching is found in the Buddhist books, and in the rock edicts of King Asoka. Here is a Buddhist precept, which has a special interest as touching the *origin* of morals.

"Since even animals can live together in mutual reverence, confidence, and courtesy, much more should you, O brethren, so let your light shine forth that you may be seen to dwell in like manner together."

The Hebrew moralists often sounded the same note. In Leviticus we find: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

In Proverbs: "If thine enemy be hungry give him bread to eat, and if he be thirsty give him water to drink."

In the Talmud it is written: "Do not unto others that which it would be disagreeable to you to suffer yourself; that is the main part of the law."

We have the same idea expressed by Christ: "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."

SEXTUS, a teacher of Epictetus, said: "What you wish your neighbours to be to you, such be also to them."

ISOCRATES said: "Act towards others as you desire others to act towards you."

KING ASOKA said: "I consider the welfare of all people as something for which I must work."

In the Buddhist "Kathâ Sarit Sâgara" it is written: "Why should we cling to this perishable body? In the eye of the wise the only thing it is good for is to benefit one's fellow creatures."

And another Buddhist author expresses the same idea with still more force and beauty: "Full of love for all things in the world, practising virtue in order to benefit others—this man alone is happy."

But even when the moralists did not lay down the "Golden Rule," they taught that the cause of sin and of suffering was selfishness; and they spoke strongly against self-pity, and self-love, and self-aggrandisement.

What is the lesson of Buddha, and of the Indian, Persian, and Greek moralists? Buddha went out into the world to search for the cause of human sin and sorrow. He found the cause to be self-indulgence and the cure to be self-conquest. "The cause of pain," he said, "is desire." And this lesson was repeated over and over again by Socrates, Plato, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and Plutarch, and Seneca.

The moral is that selfishness is bad, and unselfishness is good.

And this moral is backed by the almost universal practice of all men in all ages and of all races in testing or weighing the virtue or the value of any person's conduct.

What is the common assay for moral gold? The test of the *motive*. Sir Gorgio Midas has given £100,000 to found a Midas hospital. What says the man in the street? "Ah! fine advertisement for the Midas pills!" Mr. Queech, the grocer and churchwarden, has given £5 to the new Methodist Sunday School. "H'm!" says the cynical average man, "a sprat to catch a mackerel." Sir Norman Conquest, Bart, M.P., has made an eloquent speech in favour of old-age pensions. Chigwin, the incorruptible, remarks with a sniff that "it looks as if there would soon be a General Election."

What do these gibes mean? They mean that the benevolence of Messrs. Midas, Queech, and Conquest is inspired by selfishness, and therefore is not worthy, but base.

Now, when a gang of colliers go down a burning pit to save life, or when a sailor jumps overboard in a storm to save a drowning fireman, or when a Russian countess goes to Siberia for trying to free the Russian serfs, there is no sneer heard. Chigwin's fierce eye lights up, the man in the street nods approvingly, and the average man in the railway compartment observes sententiously, "That's pluck."

Well. Is it not clear that these acts are approved and held

good? And is it not clear that they are held to be good because they are felt to be unselfish?

Now, I make bold to say that in no case shall we find a man or woman honoured or praised by men when his conduct is believed to be selfish. It is always selfishness that men scorn. It is always self-sacrifice or unselfish service they admire. This shows us that deep in the universal heart the root idea of morality is social service. This is not a divine truth: it is a human truth.

Selfishness has come to be called "bad" because it injures the many without benefiting the one. Unselfishness has come to be called "good" because it brings benefit and pleasure to one and all. "It is twice bless'd: it blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

As Marcus Aurelius expresses it: "That which is not for the interest of the whole swarm is not for the interest of a single bee." And again he puts it: "Mankind are under one common law; and if so they must be fellow-citizens, and belong to the same body politic. From whence it will follow that the whole world is but one commonwealth."

And Epictetus, the Greek slave, said that as "God is the father of all men, then all men are brothers."

For countless ages this notion of human brotherhood, and of the evil of self-love, has been to morality what the sap is to the tree. And now let us think once more how the notion first came into being.

I said that morality—which is the knowledge of good and evil—did not come by revelation from God, but by means of evolution. And I said that this idea was first put forth by Spencer and Darwin, and afterwards dealt with by other writers.

Darwin's idea was two-fold. He held that man inherited his social instincts (on which morality is built) from the lower animals; and he thought that very likely the origin of the social instinct in animals was the relation of the parents to their young. Let us first see what Darwin said.

In Chapter Four of *The Descent of Man* Darwin deals with "moral sense." After remarking that, so far as he knows, no one has approached the question exclusively from the side of natural history, Darwin goes on:

> The following proposition seems to me in a high degree probable—namely, that any animal whatever, endowed with well-marked social instincts, the parental and filial affections being here included, would inevitably acquire a moral sense, or con-

science, as soon as its intellectual powers had become as well, or nearly as well, developed as in man.

For, firstly, the social instincts lead an animal to take pleasure in the society of its fellows, and feel a certain amount of sympathy with them, and to perform various services for them. . . .

Every one must have noticed how miserable dogs, horses, sheep, etc., are when separated from their companions, and what strong mutual affection the two former kinds, at least, shown on their reunion. . . .

All animals living in a body, which defend themselves or attack their enemies in concert, must indeed be in some degree faithful to one another; and those that follow a leader must be in some degree obedient. When the baboons in Abyssinia plunder a garden, they silently follow a leader, and if an imprudent young animal makes a noise, he receives a slap from the others to teach him silence and obedience. . . .

With respect to the impulse which leads certain animals to associate together, and to aid one another in many ways, we may infer that in most cases they are impelled by the same sense of satisfaction or pleasure which they experience in performing other instinctive actions. . . .

In however complex a manner this feeling (sympathy) may have originated, as it is one of high importance to all those animals which aid and defend one another, it will have been increased through natural selection for those communities which included the greatest number of sympathetic members would flourish best and rear the greatest number of offspring. . . .

Thus the social instincts, which must have been acquired by man in a very rude state, and probably even by his early ape-like progenitors, still give the impulse to some of his best actions; but his actions are in a higher degree determined by the expressed wishes and judgment of his fellow-men, and unfortunately very often by his own strong selfish desires.

Those quotations should be enough to show Darwin's idea of the origin of the social, or moral, feelings. But I shall quote besides Haeckel's comment on Darwin's theory.

Speaking of the "Golden Rule" in his *Confessions of Faith of a Man of Science,* Haeckel says:

In the human family this maxim has always been accepted as self-evident; as ethical instinct it was an inheritance derived

from our animal ancestors. It had already found a place among the herds of apes and other social mammals; in a similar manner, but with wider scope, it was already present in the most primitive communities and among the hordes of the least advanced savages. Brotherly love—mutual support, succour, protection, and the like—had already made its appearance among gregarious animals as a social duty; for without it, the continued existence of such societies is impossible. Although at a later period, in the case of man, these moral foundations of society came to be much more highly developed, their oldest prehistoric source, as Darwin has shown, is to be sought in the social instincts of animals. Among the higher vertebrates (dogs, horses, elephants, etc.), the development of social relations and duties is the indispensable condition of their living together in orderly societies. Such societies have for man also been the most important instrument of intellectual and moral progress.

There is a very able article in the March, 1905, issue of the *Nineteenth Century,* by Prince Kropotkin, the author of *Mutual Aid,* on Darwin's theory of the origin of the moral sense, in which the striking suggestion is made that primitive man, besides inheriting from animals the social instinct, also copied from them the first rudiments of tribal union and mutual aid. This notion may be gathered from the following picturesque passages:

Primitive man lived in close intimacy with animals. With some of them he probably shared the shelters under the rocks, occasionally the caverns, and very often food. . . .

Our primitive ancestors lived *with* the animals, in the midst of them. And as soon as they began to bring some order into their observations of nature, and to transmit them to posterity, the animals and their life supplied them with the chief materials for their unwritten encyclopædia of knowledge, as well as for their wisdom, which they expressed in proverbs and sayings. Animal psychology was the first pschology man was aware of—it is still a favourite subject of talk at the camp fires; animal life, closely interwoven with that of man, was the subject of the very first rudiments of art, inspiring the first engravers and sculptors, and entering into the composition of the most ancient epical traditions and cosmogonic myths. . . .

The first thing which our children learn in natural history

is something about the beasts of prey—the lions and the tigers. But the first thing that primitive savages must have learned about nature was that it represents a vast agglomeration of animal clans and tribes; the ape tribe, so nearly related to man, the ever-prowling wolf tribe, the knowing, chattering bird tribe, the ever-busy insect tribe, and on. For them the animals were an extension of their own kin—only so much wiser than themselves. And the first vague generalisation which men must have made about nature—so vague as to hardly differ from a mere impression—was that the living being and his clan or tribe are inseparable. *We* can separate them—*they* could not; and it seems even doubtful whether they could *think* of life otherwise than within a clan or a tribe. . . .

And that man who had witnessed once an attack of wild dogs, or dholes, upon the biggest beasts of prey, certainly realised, once and for ever, the irresistible force of the tribal unions, and the confidence and courage with which they inspire every individual. Man made divinities of these dogs, and worshipped them, trying by all sorts of magic to acquire their courage.

In the prairies and the woods our earliest ancestors saw myriads of animals, all living in clans and tribes. Countless herds of red deer, fallow deer, reindeer, gazelles, and antelopes, thousands of droves of buffaloes and legions of wild horses, wild donkeys, quaggas, zebras, and so on, were moving over the boundless plains, peacefully grazing side by side. Even the dreary plateaus had their herds of llamas and wild camels. And when man approached these animals, he soon realised how closely connected all these beings were in their respective droves or herds. Even when they seemed fully absorbed in grazing, and apparently took no notice of the others, they closely watched each other's movements, always ready to join in some common action. Man saw that all the deer tribe, whether they graze or merely gambol, always kept sentries, which never release their watchfulness and never are late to signal the approach of a beast of prey; he knew how, in case of a sudden attack, the males and the females would encircle their young ones and face the enemy, exposing their lives for the safety of the feeble ones; and how, even with such timid creatures as the antelopes, or the fallow deer, the old males would often sacrifice themselves in order to cover the retreat of the herd. Man knew all that, which we ignore or easily forget, and he repeated it in his tales, embellishing the acts of courage

and self-sacrifice with his primitive poetry, or mimicking them in his religious tribal dances. . . .

Social life—that is, *we*, not *I*—is, in the eyes of primitive man, the normal form of life. *It is life itself.* Therefore "we" must have been the normal form of thinking for primitive man: a "category" of his understanding, as Kant might have said. And not even "we," which is still too personal, because it represents a multiplication of the *"I's,"* but rather such expression as "the men of the beaver tribe," "the kangaroo men," or "the turtles." This was the primitive form of thinking, which nature impressed upon the mind of man.

Here, in that identification, or, we might even say, in this absorption of the "I" by the tribe, lies the root of all ethical thought. The self-asserting "individual" came much later on. Even now, with the lower savages, the "individual" hardly exists at all. It is the tribe, with its hard-and-fast rules, superstitions, taboos, habits, and interests, which is always present in the mind of the child of nature. And in that constant, ever-present identification of the unit with the whole lies the substratum of all ethics, the germ out of which all the subsequent conceptions of justice, and the still higher conceptions of morality, grew up in the course of evolution.

Besides these excellent contributions to the subject, Prince Kropotkin gives us other new and striking thoughts, bearing upon the parental source of the social feelings indicated by Darwin. But first let us go back to Darwin. In Chapter Four of *The Descent of Man* Darwin says:

> The feeling of pleasure from society is probably an extension of the parental or filial affections, since the social instinct seems to be developed by the young remaining for a long time with their parents, and this extension may be attributed in part to habit, but chiefly to natural selection. With those animals which were benefited by living in close association, the individuals which took the greatest pleasure in society would best escape various dangers, whilst those that cared least for their comrades, and lived solitary, would perish in greater numbers.

Dr. Saleeby, in the *Academy* in the spring of 1905, had some interesting remarks upon the origin of altruism. He "finds in the breast of the mammalian mother the fount whence love has

flowed," and points out that the higher we go in the mammalian scale the more dependent are the young upon their mothers.

After describing the helplessness of the human baby, he continues thus:

> Yet, this is the creature which has spread over the earth so that he numbers some fifteen hundred millions to-day. He is the "lord of creation," master of creatures bigger, stronger, fleeter, longer-lived than himself. The earth is his and the fulness thereof. Yet without love not one single specimen of him has a chance of reaching maturity, or even surviving for a week. Verily love is the greatest thing in the world.

Well, upon this subject of the parental origin of altruism, Prince Kropotkin throws another light. First, alluding to Darwin's cautious handling of the subject of the maternal origin of social feelings, Prince Kropotkin, quotes Darwin's own remarkable comment, thus:

> This caution was fully justified, because in other places he pointed out that the social instinct must be *a separate instinct in itself,* different from the others—an instinct which has been developed by natural selection *for its own sake,* as it was useful for the well-being and preservation of the species. It is so fundamental, that when it runs against another instinct, even one so strong as the attachment of the parents to their offspring, it often takes the upper hand. Birds, when the time has come for their autumn migration, will leave behind their tender young, not yet old enough for a prolonged flight, and follow their comrades.

He then offers the following suggestion:

> To this striking illustration I may also add that the social instinct is strongly developed with many lower animals, such as the land-crabs, or the Molucca crab; as also with certain fishes, with whom it hardly could be considered as an extension of the filial or parental feelings. In these cases it appears rather an extension of the *brotherly* or *sisterly* relations or feelings of *comradeship,* which probably develop each time that a considerable number of young animals, having been hatched at a given place and at a given moment, continue to live together—whether they are with their parents or not. It would

seem, therefore, more correct to consider the social and the parental instincts as *two* closely connected instincts, of which the former is perhaps the earlier, and therefore the stronger, and which both go hand in hand in the evolution of the animal world. Both are favoured by natural selection, which as soon as they come into conflict keeps the balance between the two, for the ultimate good of the species.

To sum up all these ideas. We find it suggested that the social feelings from which morality sprang, were partly inherited by man from his animal ancestors, partly imitated from observation of the animals he knew so well in his wild life.

And we find it suggested that these social feelings probably began in the love of animals for their young, and in the brotherhood and comradeship of the young for each other.

It was the social feelings of men that made their Bibles: the Bibles did not make the social feelings.

Morality is the result of evolution, not of revelation.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE ANCESTRAL STRUGGLE—WITHIN US

I HAVE spoken of the "nature" handed down to us by our fore-parents. I might have said "natures," for our inheritance, being not from one, but from many, is not simple, but compound.

We too commonly think of a man as an Englishman or a Frenchman; as a Londoner or a Yorkshireman; as good or bad.

We too commonly think of a man as one person, instead of as a mixture of many persons. As though John Smith were *all* John Smith, and *always* John Smith.

There is no such thing as an unmixed Englishman, Irishman, or Yorkshireman.

There is no such thing as an unmixed John Smith.

Englishmen are bred from the Ancient Briton, from the Roman, from the Picts and Scots, from the Saxons, the Danes, the Norwegians, the Normans, the French. All these varied and antagonistic bloods were mixed in centuries ago.

Since then the mixing has gone on, plentifully varied by intermarriage with Irish, Scots, Dutch, Germans, Belgians, French, Italians, Poles, and Spaniards. We have had refugees and immigrants from all parts of Europe. We have given homes to the Huguenots, and the Emigrés from France, to the Lollards and Lutherans from the Netherlands, to crowding fugitives from Russia, Holland, Hungary, Italy, and Greece. We have absorbed these foreigners and taken them into our blood. And the descendants of all these mixed races are called Englishmen.

The Londoner is a mixture of all those races, and more. From every part of England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales; from most parts of Europe, from many parts of America and Asia, and even Africa, streams of foreign blood have flowed in to make the Londoner.

In Yorkshire there are several distinct races, though none of them are pure. There is one Yorkshire type bearing marks of descent from the Norsemen, another bearing marks of descent from the Flemish and French immigrants, and another from

the Normandy invaders. I have seen Vikings, Belgians, and Normans all playing cricket in the Yorkshire County team.

In Ireland there are Irishmen from Denmark and Norway, Irishmen from Ancient Mongolia, and, especially in Kerry, Irishmen who seem to be of almost pure Iberian type.

The Iberian Irishman is short, dark, aquiline, and sardonic, with black hair and eyes, and a moustache more like a Tartar's than a European's. The Viking Irishman is big and burly, with blue or grey eyes, and reddish hair and beard; the difference between these two types is as great as that between a Saxon and a Spaniard.

One of these Irish Iberians marries a Yorkshire Dane. Their son marries the daughter of a Lancashire Belgian and an Ancient Briton from Flint; and their children are English.

As I said just now, we think of John Smith as *all* John Smith and *always* John Smith.

But John is a mixture of millions of men and women, many of them as different from each other as John Ridd is different from Dick Swiveller, or as Diana of the Crossways is different from Betsy Trotwood. And these uncountable and conflicting natures are not extinct: they are alive and busy in the motley jumble we call John Smith.

John is not all John. He is, a great deal of him, Roman soldier, Ancient Briton, Viking pirate, Flemish weaver, Cornish fisherman, Lowland scholar, Irish grazier, London chorus girl, Yorkshire spinner, Welsh dairymaid, and a host of other gentle and simple, wild and tame, gay and grave, sweet and sour, fickle and constant, lovable and repellent ancestors; from his great-great-grandparent, the hairy treeman, with flat feet and club like a young larch, to his respectable father, the white-fronted, silk-hatted clerk in the Pudsey Penny Savings Bank.

And, being as he is, not all John Smith, but rather the knotted, crossed, and tangled mixture of Johns and Marys, and Smiths and Browns and Robinsons, that has been growing more dense and intricate for tens of thousands of years, how can we expect our good John to be always the same John?

We know John is many Johns in the course of a summer's day. We have seen him, possibly, skip back to the cave-man in a spasm of rage, glow with the tenderness of the French lady who died of the plague in the Fourteenth Century, and then smile the smile of the merry young soldier who was shot at Dettingen—all in the time it takes him to clench and unclench his hand, or to feel in his

pocket for a penny, or to flash a glance at a pretty face in the crowd.

John Smith is not English, nor Yorkshire; but human. He is not one man; but many men, and, which counts for more, many women.

And how can we say of John Smith that he is "good" or "bad"? It is like saying of a bottle of beads, mixed of fifty colours, that it is red, or blue. As John's ancestors were made up of good and bad, and as he is made up of them, so John is good and bad in stripes or patches: is good and bad by turns.

We speak of these mixed natures which a man inherits from his fore-parents as his "disposition": we call them "the qualities of his mind," and we wonder when we find him inconsistent, changeable, undecided. Ought we to be surprised that the continual struggle for the mastery amongst so many alien natures leads to unlooked-for and unwished-for results?

Take the case of a council, a cabinet, a regiment, composed of antagonistic natures; what happens? There are disputes, confusion, contradictions, cross-purposes. Well: a man is like a crowd, a Parliament, a camp of ill-matched foreign allies. Indeed, he *is* a crowd—a crowd of alien and ill-sorted ancestors.

The Great Arteries of Human Nature

But, differ from each other as we may, there are some general qualities—some *human* qualities—common to most of us.

These common qualities may be split into two kinds, selfish and unselfish.

The selfish instincts come down to us from our earlier brute ancestors.

The unselfish instincts come down to us from our later brute ancestors, and from our human ancestors.

Amongst the strongest and the deepest of man's instincts are love of woman, love of children, love of pleasure, love of art, love of humanity, love of adventure, and love of praise.

I should say that the commonest and most lasting of all human passions is the love of praise: called by some "love of approbation."

From this great trunk impulse there spring many branches. Nearly all our vanities, ambitions, affectations, covetings, are born of our thirst for praise. It is largely in the hope of exciting the wonder or the admiration of our fellows that we toil and scramble

and snatch and fight, for wealth, for power, for place; for masterly or daring achievement.

None but misers love money for its own sake. It is for what money will buy that men covet it; and the most desired of the things money will buy are power and display: the value of which lies in the astonishment they will create, and the flattery they will win.

How much meaning would remain to such proud and potent words as glory, riches, conquest, fame, hero, triumph, splendour, if they were bereft of the glamour of human wonder and applause?

What man will bear and do and suffer for love of woman, and woman for love of man; what both will sacrifice for the sake of their children; how the devotee of art and science, literature, or war, will cleave to the work of his choice; with what eagerness the adventurer will follow his darling bent, seeking in the ends of the earth for excitement, happy to gaze once more into the "bright eyes of danger"; with what cheerful steadfastness and unwearied self-denial benevolence will labour for the good of the race; is known to us all. What we should remember is that these and other powers of our nature act and react upon each other: that one impulse checks, or goads, or diverts another.

Thus the love of our fellows will often check or turn aside our love of ourselves. Often when the desire for praise beckons us the dread of blame calls us back again. The love of praise may even lure us towards an act, and baulk us of its performance: as when a cricketer sacrifices the applause of the crowd in order to win the praise of captain or critics.

So will the lust of pleasure struggle against the lust of fame; the love of woman against the love of art; the passion for adventure against the desire for wealth; and the victory will be to the stronger.

Let us look into the human heart (the best way is to look into our own) and see how these inherited qualities work for and against each other.

One of the strongest checks is fear; another is what we call conscience.

Fear springs sometimes from "love of approbation"; we shrink from an act from fear of being found out, which would mean the loss of that esteem we so prize. Or we shrink from fear of bodily pain: as those knew well who invented the terrors of hell-fire.

There is a great deal of most respectable virtue that ought to be called cowardice. Deprive virtue of its "dare nots," and how

many "would nots" and "should nots" might survive? Good conduct may not mean the presence of virtue, but the lack of courage, or desire.

But, happily, men do right, also, for right's sake; and because it is right; or they refrain from doing wrong because it is wrong.

The bent towards right conduct arises from one of two sources:

1. Education: we have been *taught* that certain acts are wrong.
2. Natural benevolence: a dislike to injure others.

The first of these—education—has to do with "environment"; the second is part of heredity. One we get from our fellow-men, the other from our ancestors.

Here let us pause to look into that much-preached-of "mystery" of the "dual consciousness," or "double-self."

We all know that men often do things which they know to be wrong. When we halt between the desire to do a thing, and the feeling that we ought not to do it, we seem to have two minds within us, and these two minds dispute about the decision.

What is this "mysterious" double-self? It is nothing but the contest between heredity and environment; and is not mysterious at all.

Heredity is very old. It reaches back to the beasts. It passes on to us, generation after generation, for millions of years, certain instincts, impulses, or desires of the beast.

Environment is new. It begins at the cradle. It prints upon us certain lessons of right and wrong. It tells us that we ought not to do certain things.

But the desire to do those things is part of our heredity. It is in our blood. It is persistent, turbulent, powerful. It rises up suddenly, with a glare and a snarl, like a wild beast in its lair. And at the sound of its roar, and the flame of its lambent eyes, and the feel of its fiery breath, memory lifts its voice and hand, and repeats the well-learned lesson with its "shall-nots."

We are told that the animal impulses dwell in the "hind brain," and that morals and thought dwell in the "fore brain." The "dual personality," then, the "double-self," consists of the two halves of the brain; and the dispute between passion and reason, or between desire and morality, is a conflict between the lower man and the higher; between the old Adam and the new.

But it is also, to a great extent, a conflict between the average man and the hero, or leader.

We inherit the roots of morality, that is to say, the "social instincts," or impulses of unselfish thoughts for others, from the sociable animals. But what we call "ethics," the rules or laws of moral conduct, have been slowly built up by human teachers. These teachers have been men with a special genius for morals. They have made codes of morals higher than the nature of the average man can reach.

But the average man has been taught these codes of morals in his childhood, and has grown up in unquestioning respect for them.

So when his baser nature prompts him to an act, and his memory repeats the moral lesson it has learnt, we have the nature of the average man confronted by the teaching of the superior or more highly moral man.

And there is naturally a conflict between the desire to do evil, and the knowledge of what things are good. It is not easy for Wat Tyler, Corporal Trim, or Sir John Falstaff to follow the moral lines laid down by such men as Buddha, Seneca, or Socrates. Sir John knows the value of temperance; but he has a potent love of sack. Wat knows that it is good for a man to govern his temper; but he is a choleric subject, and "hefty" with a hammer. There was a lot of human nature in the shipwright, who being reminded that St. Paul said a man was better single, retorted that "St. Paul wasn't a North Shields man."

Our Possibilities

We know very well that some qualities may make either for good or bad. Strength, ability, courage, emulation, may go to the making of a great hero, or a great criminal..

If a man's bent, or teaching, be good, he will do better, if it be evil he will do worse by reason of his talents, his daring, or his resolution.

Dirt has been defined as "matter in the wrong place": badness might be often defined as goodness misapplied. Courage ill-directed is foolhardiness; caution in excess is cowardice; firmness overstrained is obstinacy.

Many of our inherited qualities are what we call "potentialities": they are "possibilities," capabilities, strong, or potential for good *or* evil.

Love of praise may drive a man to seek fame as a philanthropist, a tyrant, a discoverer, or a train-robber.

Love of adventure and love of fame had as much to do with

the exploits of Claude Duval and Morgan, the buccaneer, as with those of Drake or Clive.

Nelson was as keen for fame as Buonaparte: but the Englishman loved his country; the Corsican himself.

Doubtless Torquemada had as much religious zeal as St. Francis; but the one breathed curses, the other blessings.

Pugnacity is good when used against tyranny or wrong; it is bad when used against liberty or right.

Men of brilliant parts have failed for lack of industry or judgment. Men of noble qualities have gone to ruin because of some inborn weakness, or bias towards vice. Our minds "are of a mingled yarn, good and ill together." Many of life's most tragic human failures have been "sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh." Ophelia was not the first woman, nor the last by many millions, to perish through reaching for flowers that grow aslant the brook. If virtue is often cowardice, frailty is often love; and the words of Laertes to the "churlish priest" might frequently be spoken for some poor "Bottom Dog" in reproach of the unjust censure of a Pharisee: "a ministering angel shall my sister be, when thou liest howling."

We must remember, then, that the happiness or unhappiness of our nature depends not so much upon any special quality as upon the general balance of the whole.

Poor Oscar Wilde had many fine qualities, but his egotism, his vicious taint, and, perhaps, his unfortunate surroundings, drove him to shipwreck, with all his golden talents aboard. Every day noble ships run upon the rocks; every day brave pennons go down in the press of the battle, and are trampled in the blood and dust; every day lackeys ride in triumph, and princes slave on the galleys; every day the sweet buds go to the swine-trough, and the gay and fair young children to shame or the jail.

Some fall through loving too much, others through loving not at all. Some are shattered by a single fault, like a ruby cup with one flaw in its radiant heart. Some are twisted out of all hope from birth, like one of Omar's pots, which the potter moulded awry. Some seeds of innocent lilies, or roses of loveliness, or passion flowers divine, are scattered upon the rocks, or blown by harsh winds out to sea.

Do you know Thomas Carlyle's burning words concerning these tragic fates?

> Cholera doctors, hired to dive into black dens of infection and despair, they, rushing about all day, from lane to lane,

with their life in their hand, are found to do their function; which is a much more rugged one than Howard's. O, what say we, Cholera Doctors? Ragged losels, gathered by beat of drum from the over-crowded streets of cities, and drilled a little, and dressed in red, do not they stand fire in an uncensurable manner; and handsomely give their life, if needful, at the rate of a shilling per day? Human virtue, if we went down to the roots of it, is not so rare. The materials of human virtue are everywhere abundant as the light of the sun: raw materials—O woe, and loss, and scandal thrice and three-fold, that they so seldom are elaborated, and built into a result. That they lie yet unelaborated and stagnant in the souls of widespread dreary millions, fermenting, festering; and issue at last as energetic vice instead of strong practical virtue! A Mrs. Manning "dying game"—alas, is not that the foiled potentiality of a kind of heroine too? Not a heroic Judith, not a mother of Gracchi now, but a hideous murderess, fit to be mother of hyenas! To such extent can potentialities be foiled.

Let us bear in mind, then, that a man's powers, like the powers of a state, will work for good or for evil, as they are ill or well governed.

And the government of human powers and desires depends partly upon heredity, and largely upon environment, of which in its due place.

How Does Heredity Make Genius?

I shall not weary the reader witn proofs of heredity. It would be a waste of words to quote pages of Darwin, Spencer, Weissmann, and Galton for the sake of proving the obvious. Our own observation and common sense will convince us that our traits and qualities of body and mind are inherited.

We know that rabbits do not breed kittens, nor eagles geese, nor apples oranges, nor negroes whites. We know that in all cases where the breed is pure the descent is pure; and we understand that where a black sheep is born into a white flock, or a fair child is born of dark fore-parents, the "sport," as it is called, is due to atavism, or breeding back. Somewhere, near or far, the breed has been "crossed."

But there is one question that has caused a good deal of doubt and perplexity, and, as the answer to that quesion is not obvious, we will consider it here.

A "sport" is "an individual departure from a type." A sport is a "freak of nature." A genius is a "sport"; and the question we are to answer here is:

How does heredity account for genius?

To make the matter quite clear, and to meet all doubts, we will split our question into two:

1. How is it that genius does not always beget genius?
2. How is it mediocrity does sometimes beget genius?

Take the first question. How is it that genius does not always beget genius? Mr. Galton has disposed of the objection that clever men do not have clever sons by showing that clever men often do have clever sons.

But the fact remains that such men as Shakespeare, Plato, Cæsar, and Socrates never have children as great as themselves. And it has been claimed that this fact belies heredity.

But to those who know even a very little about heredity it is quite obvious that we ought not to expect the son of a very great genius to be equal to his father.

Such a recurrence is rendered almost impossible by the law of variation.

A great man is a lucky product of heredity and environment. He is a fortunate, and accidental, blending of several qualities which make greatness possible.

But the great man's son is not born of the same parents as his father. His blood is only half of it drawn from the families which produced his father's greatness; the other half is from another family, which may contain no elements of greatness.

Thus so far from its being strange that genius does not beget genius, we see that it would be strange if genius did beget genius.

The children of Shakespeare would not be Shakespeareans: they would be half Shakespeare and half Hathaway; and it is quite possible that their intellectual qualities might come chiefly from the mother's side.

Now, if Ann Hathaway's family were not intellectually equal to Shakespeare's family, how could we expect the children of those two to be equal to the child of the superior breed?

We should not expect a mixture of wine and water to be all wine; nor the foal of a blood horse and a half-bred mare to be a thoroughbred horse. So much for the first question. Those who ask such a question have lost sight of the law of variation.

Now for the second question. How is it that mediocrity breeds genius? The answer to that is that mediocrity does *not* breed genius.

Let us take a case that is often cited: the case of the great musician, Handel.

George Frederick Handel was a musical genius; and we are told that heredity does not account for his genius, as no other member of his family had ever displayed any special musical talent. Whence, then, did Handel get his musical genius?

What are the qualities that go to the making of a great composer? First, an exquisite ear; that implies great gifts of time and tune. Second, a great imagination. Third, an "infinite capacity for taking pains." Fourth, a quick and sensitive nervous system.

Now, a man might possess great industry, or ambition, and sensitive nerves, and not be an artist of any kind.

He might have a great imagination, and lack the industry or the ambition to use it effectively.

He might have industry, ambition, sensitive nerves, and great imagination, and yet without the musical ear he would never be a musician.

And the same may be said of any one or more of his ancestors.

Therefore, there may have been amongst Handel's foreparents all the qualities needed for the making of a great musician without those qualities ever happening to be united in one person.

Let us suppose a case. A man of energy and ambition, but with average imagination, and an average ear, marries a woman of ordinary mind. Their son marries a woman of strong imagination. The child of this second union marries a woman of refined nature and considerable imagination. The son of this union may be ambitious, imaginative, and energetic, for he may inherit all those qualities from his foreparents.

Then the only trait left to be accounted for is the fine musical ear.

Now that gift for music may have come down to him from some distant foreparent, living in an age when such a quality had no outlet. Or it may have come down to him from some foreparent who lacked ambition or energy to use it in a striking way.

It happens very often that a son inherits his finest intellectual and emotional qualities from his mother.

And we know that a talent of any kind is more likely to lie dormant in a woman than in a man. For the woman may spend all her time and attention upon her home, her husband, her children.

I knew a case in which two sisters possessed considerable artistic talent. Yet, so far as anyone knew, none of their foreparents had shown artistic ability. But one of the sisters told me

that her mother had a remarkable gift for drawing, which she had never used, "except to amuse her children."

Now, when we come to look into the case of Handel, we find that his father's family never gave any sign of musical talent. But of his mother's family, and of the families of his grandmother and great-grandmother we know little.

But Handel's father was ambitious and energetic, and his mother is described as follows:

> The mother was thirty-three years old, and, we are told, was "clear-minded, of strong piety, with a great knowledge of the Bible . . . a capable manager, earnest, and of pleasant manners."

Is there any proof that Handel's mother had not a good musical ear? None. Is there any proof that she had not, lying dormant, some special gift for music, inherited from some ancestor? None.

In that day, and in that part of Germany, music was set little store by, and musicians were regarded much as actors were in England. Therefore any great musical gift which happened to be inherited by a woman would have small chance of being developed or used. And it is quite possible that Handel may have inherited his ear from his mother's family.

Again, the musical talent may have been a quality that had been improving by marriage for several generations. Or it may have been an accident, due to some physical process about which we cannot possibly have any direct knowledge.

For instance, just as some special excellence of some special organ may be handed down, so may some special defect. A child may inherit the defect, or the excellence. Or he may inherit a talent from both parents, and so may excel them both.

A man may inherit his genius piecemeal from a hundred ancestors, some of them dead for centuries, or he may owe his special brilliance to some excitement, or even to some derangement of the nervous system. In fact, to what Lombroso calls "degeneracy."

He may be like a river, fed by several ancestral streams. He may be the descendant of some "mute inglorious Milton." But one thing he is not—he is not a "mystery." There is nothing in his greatness more mysterious than the accumulation of money in a bank, or the agrandisement of a river by its tributary streams, or the sudden appearance of a pattern of unusual beauty in a kaleidoscope.

There is nothing in genius to belie heredity. There is nothing in genius that cannot be accounted for by heredity—if we remember the laws of variation, and of atavism, or breeding back.

"The Born Criminal"

Speaking strictly, there are no "born criminals"; but there are some unfortunate creatures born with a nature prone to crime, just as there are others born with a nature prone to disease.

These "born criminals," regarded by their better-endowed or luckier brothers and sisters as "wicked," are the victims of "atavism" or of "degeneracy."

They are as much to be pitied, and as little to be blamed, as those born with a liability to insanity or consumption.

Atavism, as we have seen, is a reversion to an older and a lower type, a "breeding back," in some points, to the savage or the brute.

"Degeneracy" is the inherited result of vice, insanity, or disease in the parent Lombroso describes degeneracy as "the action of heredity in the children of the inebriate, the syphilitic, the insane, the consumptive, etc.; or of accidental causes, such as lesions of the head, or the action of mercury, which profoundly change the tissues, perpetuates neuroses or other diseases in the patient, and, which is worse, aggravates them in his descendants."

The atavist is a man born with the nature, or some of the traits of bestial or savage ancestors. He is bred back to the type that was before morals. He is born with strong animal traits, with few social qualities; with little or no moral brain. He is a modern child, born with the passions, or the appetites, or the intelligence, of an ape, or a cave-man. To expect him to rise to the moral standard of to-day, and to blame him if he fail, is as unreasonable as it would be to expect the same conduct from a gorilla, or a panther.

If the atavist is "wicked," the shark, and the wolf, and the adder are "wicked."

To say that the atavistic man has "reason" is no answer: he has *not* the kind of reason that makes for peace and order. His misfortune just lies in the fact that he is "bred back" to the kind of reason which, amongst the cave-men, perhaps, made a man a leader, or a hero, but amongst civilised Western people makes him a "born criminal."

I said before, that to blame a Spaniard for being proud is to blame him for being born of Spanish parents. It is just as true

to say that to blame a man for being a "born criminal" is to blame him because some of his baser ancestors have accidentally passed on to him the traits of their lower natures.

Indeed, it is plainly absurd to blame a man for being "born" anything, since he had no hand nor part in his birth.

All we can do with regard to the "born criminal" is to pity him for his unhappy inheritance, and try to make the best of him. So far we have never tried to make the best of him; but have usually made almost the worst of him, by meeting his hate with our hate, his ignorance with our ignorance, his ferocity with our ferocity. Nature, or God, having cursed the poor wretch with a heritage of shame, we have come forward, in the name of humanity and justice, to punish and execrate him for his fatal mischoice of ancestors. It is as though we should flog a gorilla or a hyæna for having wickedly refused to be born a Canon of St. Paul's, or a Primitive Methodist Sunday school teacher.

But some will suppose that the "born criminal" might be a sober, law-abiding, and God-fearing man, "if he would try"; and they do not understand that the man with the atavistic brain *cannot* try.

He has not got the kind of brain that can try to be what we think he ought to be. We do not expect the bear to "try" to be polite, nor the hog to "try" to be cleanly. We know they cannot try to be either of those things. Neither can the atavistic man *try* to be something for which his nature was not made.

What is sauce for the atavist is sauce for the degenerate. He also is the victim of cruel fate. He also inherits misfortune, or shame, or disaster from his fathers. His nature is not a casting back to an ancient type: it is a nature poisoned, maimed, perverted, or spoiled through the vices or the diseases of those who brought him into the world.

The degenerate may inherit from a diseased or drunken parent an imperfect mind or an imperfect body. He may be born with a weak moral sense, or with weak lungs, or with an ill-balanced brain.

Proneness to crime or proneness to disease may be born in him through no fault of his own. The cause is the same in both cases: the vice or disease of a parent.

Now it is certain that we do not blame, but pity, and that we do not punish but help the victim whose degeneracy takes the form of disease. But we do blame and we do punish the victim whose degeneracy takes the form of immorality or crime.

In neither case is the degeneracy the fault of the degenerate:

in both cases it is handed down to him by his parent or parents. Yet in the one case he gets our sympathy, and in the other case our censure.

There is neither justice nor reason in such treatment of those who have the misfortune to be born—in the true sense of the words—of "unsound mind."

Those who have made a scientific study of crime tell us that "psychic atavism is the dominant characteristic of the born criminal."

What is "psychic atavism"? It is a breeding back, or "casting back" to a lower type of mind. This atavistic mind is inherited by the "born criminal" just as certain "muscles common to apes" are inherited by some other men.

And we are told that this inherited atavistic mind is "the dominant characteristic of the criminal born." In other words, those men whom we have always blamed and punished as exceptionally "wicked," have inherited an atavistic, or criminal, mind from ancestors who died millions of years ago. The most noticeable and striking fact about the born criminal is his unfortunate inheritance of that atavistic mind.

And in the plenitude of our wisdom and the glow of our righteous wrath, we hang a man, or flog him, or brand him, or loathe him, because a cruel fate has visited upon him an affliction more pitiable than blindness, or lameness, or paralysis, or consumption.

In cases of psychic atavism the actual form of the brain, or the skull, is more or less like that of the older and lower type to which the luckless atavist has been cast back. The skull of the "born criminal" is the skull of the ape-man, or the cave-man. It has a low and retreating forehead, a heavy and square jaw, and is large behind, where the baser animal parts of the brain are placed.

Now, to expect the same morals and the same intelligence from a man cursed with the skull of a gorilla, or the brain of a wild hog, as from the man blest with the skull and brain of a Socrates or a Shakespeare, is like expecting figs to grow upon thistles, or fish to breathe without gills.

And to blame a man for the shape of his skull, or the balance of his brain, is as foolish as to blame him because he has no eye for colour or no ear for music, or because his "having in beard is as a younger brother's revenue."

Speaking on this subject in his excellent book, "The Diseases of Society," Dr. Lydston, Professor of Criminal Anthropology, who is a well-known authority in America, says:

Atavism, or reversion of type, is a most important phase of the relation of evolutionary law to criminal and vice tendencies. . . . Reversion of type may be psychic (mental) or physical or both.

Whether associated with obvious physical reversions or not, psychic atavism is the dominant characteristic of the criminal. It is certainly the principal phenomenon involved in the study of the crime question, because it constitutes the dynamics of crime. The outcropping of ancestral types of mentality is observed to underlie many of the manifestations of vice and crime. These ancestral types or traits may revert farther back even than the savage progenitors of civilised man, and approximate those of the lower animals who, in turn, stand behind the savage in the line of descent. . . .

Lombroso assigns to atavism a position of pre-eminence in the etiology of crime. In effect he thinks that crime is a return to primitive and barbarous ancestral conditions, the criminal being practically a savage, born later than his day. Obviously this view fits very accurately the so-called born criminal, comprising about one-tenth of the entire criminal population.

But what of the other victims of heredity: the criminal, or immoral "degenerate"? Let us take a few facts, and see what they will teach us.

Dr. Lydston testifies as follows:

Rev. O. McCulloch has traced the life histories of seventeen hundred and fifty degenerate criminal and pauper descendants of one "Ben Ishmael," who lived in Kentucky in 1790.

The Rev. Dr. Stocker, of Berlin, traced eight hundred and thirty-four descendants of two sisters, who lived in 1825. Among them were seventy-six who had served one hundred and sixteen years in prison, one hundred and sixty-four prostitutes, one hundred and six illegitimate children, seventeen pimps, one hundred and forty-two beggars, and sixty-four paupers.

It has been estimated by Sichart, Director of Prisons in Wurtemburg, that over twenty-five per cent. of the German prison population comes from a degenerate ancestry. Vergilis claims thirty-two per cent. for Italian criminals.

Now, bearing in mind that the unfortunate children of drunken, diseased, criminal, vicious, and insane parents may, and in very

many cases will, either become criminal or immoral, or, becoming imbecile or diseased, will breed other degenerate children who will become criminal or immoral, let us consider the following plain facts taken from a London daily paper of the present year (1905).

It is estimated that there are 50,000 epileptic children in the United Kingdom, and that one child in every 100 of the population is feeble-minded.

In the last few years special schools have been opened for these children, and they are trained until they are sixteen years of age. At that age they are turned out into the world. A few are able to look after themselves. The majority drift into imbecility and vice, and flood the workhouses and prisons.

At a meeting in the Guildhall, London, called to discuss the means of dealing with imbeciles and epileptics, a speech was made by Dr. Potts, of Birmingham, of which the following is a condensed report, cut by me from the *Daily Express:*

Terrible facts with regard to feeble-minded and defective women were given by Dr. Potts. He paid a visit to a girls' night shelter, and investigated the first twelve cases he found there. Here is their record:

1. Consumptive, both parents died of the disease.
2. Neurotic drunkard, with a family who had suffered from St. Vitus' dance.
3. Normal.
4. Deaf and mentally defective.
5. Neurotic and mentally defective.
6. No congenital defect, but health ruined by drink.
7 and 8. Feeble character.
9. Suffering from persistent bad memory.
10. Twice imprisoned for theft; daughter of drunken loafer.
11. Normal.
12. Mentally defective and suffering from heart disease.

Thus, out of twelve only two were normal individuals. Yet the ten were free to go as they liked, and to bring up defective children.

"It is well known," said Dr. Potts, "that a large number of the inmates of penitentiaries are feeble-minded women."

We see, then, that a great many poor imbeciles are regularly

sent to prison as criminals. On that point allow me to put in the evidence of Sir Robert Anderson, late of Scotland Yard. Speaking of the feeble-minded, Sir Robert said (I quote again from the London Press):

> My deliberate conviction is that our present prison methods and prison discipline are absolutely brutal to these poor persons. People say the law of Moses is brutal, but it is not so brutal as the present criminal system of England.
>
> No one who has not been behind the scenes can understand in any measure the misery and cruelty of it. It is "seven days' hard labour," "a month's hard labour," time after time for these poor creatures, who ought to be dealt with like children. In prison they spend their miserable lives. Out of gaol they add to the number of their own species, and commit offences which send them back once more.
>
> Our magistrates simply send them for another month or six months. But it is not the magistrates' fault. It is the fault of the law. And this goes on in what promises to be the most intellectually conceited age since God made man upon earth. Surely we might have some pity for these poor creatures! If we have no pity for them we should have regard for the public.

That is the testimony of the late head of the Criminal Investigation Department: an Assistant Commissioner of Police, and Barrister at Law.

Let us now return to Dr. Potts, of Birmingham, for a moment. In the speech above quoted Dr. Potts gave the causes of mental defects—which are the causes that lead these poor creatures to immorality and to crime, as follows:

1. Defective nutrition in early years of life.
2. Hereditary tendency to consumption.
3. Descent from insane or criminal stock.
4. Chronic alcoholism of one or both parents.

We have here, added by Dr. Potts, another cause of degeneracy: that is, defective nutrition in early life. In plain words, improper feeding, or semi-starvation.

Later, when we come to deal with environment, I shall show that there are many other causes of degeneration and of crime. But here I only point out that atavism and degeneration account for from thirty to forty per cent. of the criminals of the present

day. That atavism and degeneration are forced upon the unborn child by heredity; that therefore these forty per cent. of our criminals are unfortunate victims of fate, and are no more blameworthy nor wicked than the victims of a railway accident, or an earthquake, or an epidemic of cholera or smallpox.

They should, as I claimed before, be pitied, and not blamed; they should be helped, not punished.

Unhappy, unblest atavistic man, that in lieu of love has only lust, in lieu of wisdom only cunning, in lieu of power violence; and with a whole world to walk in, as in a garden fair, lies wallowing hideously in the foul dungeon of his own unlightened soul.

Unhappy criminal born, most pitiful dreadful of developed creatures; lonelier and more accursed than banded wolf or solitary tiger: a waif, a spoil, a pariah "born out of his due time":

> A scribe's work writ awry and blurred,
> Spoiled music, with no perfect word,

a wretched, horrible Ishmael with his hand against the hand of every man, and every man's hand implacably against his.

On him, it would appear, has fallen the doom of the prophet, and instead of sweet spices there is rottenness, instead of a girdle a rope: branding instead of beauty.

In the barren garden of his mind no flowers will blow, his trees will bear no fruit. All human pleasure is to him a Circe cup; he finds no pathos in the children's laughter, no beauty in the dawn-shine; no glory in the constellations.

What are we to do for this wretched desperate brother who will not love us though we whip him with whips of wire, who will not make friends of us though we spurn and spit upon him; who, though we preach to him, cannot understand; who, though we teach him, cannot learn; who, though we hang him high as Haman, will "die game," cursing us with his strangled breath, mocking us with his blinded eyes; and in spite of all our intellect and righteousness going back from us unbettered and untamed into the abyss of eternity and the laboratory of evolution, whence he and we were drawn: going back from us a savage still, and in his angry heart and baffled mind holding our half-fledged knowledge and green morality in derision.

Well. He is dead; his stiff neck broken, and his body wrapped in a winding sheet of lime.

And we? We remain the superior persons we are. We are civilised, and holy. We punish weakness with blows, and misfor-

tune with chains. We teach sweet reasonableness with the cat-o'-nine-tails—steeped in brine. We exemplify gentleness and mercy with the gibbet and the axe. We brand the blind, and torture the imbecile, and execrate the miserable, and damn the diseased, and revile the fallen; we set our righteous heel upon the creeping thing, and thank our anomalous and hypothetical God of Love and Justice that we are not as those others—our atavistic brother and his degenerate children.

And our atavistic brother, the criminal born! He does not understand us, he does not admire us, he cannot love us. We fail, in some inexplicable way, to charm the deaf adder, charm we never so wisely.

But some day, perhaps, when the superior person has achieved humility, even the outlawed Bottom Dog may come by some crumbs of sympathy, some drops of the milk of human kindness, and—then?

CHAPTER SIX

ENVIRONMENT

WHAT is environment?

When we speak of a man's environment we mean his surroundings, his experiences; all that he sees, hears, feels, and learns, from the instant that the lamp of life is kindled to the instant when the light goes out.

By environment we mean everything that develops or modifies the child or the man for good or for ill.

We mean his mother's milk; the home, and the state of life into which he was born. We mean the nurse who suckles him, the children he plays with, the school he learns in, the air he breathes, the water he drinks, the food he eats. We mean the games he plays, the work he does, the sights he sees, the sounds he hears. We mean the girls he loves, the woman he marries, the children he rears, the wages he earns. We mean the sickness that tries him, the griefs that sear him, the friends who aid and the enemies who wound him. We mean all his hopes and fears, his victories and defeats; his faiths and his disillusionments. We mean all the harm he does, and all the help he gives; all the ideals that beckon him, all the temptations that lure him; all his weepings and laughter, his kissings and cursings, his lucky hits and unlucky blunders: everything he does and suffers under the sun.

I go into all this detail because we must remember that everything that happens to a man, everything that influences him, is a part of his environment.

It is a common mistake to think of environment in a narrow sense, as though environment implied no more than poverty or riches. Everything outside our skin belongs to our environment.

Let us think of it again. Education is environment; religion is environment; business and politics are environment; all the ideals, conventions, and prejudices of race and class are environment; literature, science, and the Press are environment; music, history, and sport are environment; beauty and ugliness are environment; example and precept are environment; war and travel and com-

merce are environment; sunshine and ozone, honour and dishonour, failure and success, are environment; love is environment.

I stress and multiply examples because the power of environment is so tremendous that we can hardly over-rate its importance.

A child is not born with a conscience; but with the rudiments of a conscience: the materials from which a conscience may or may not be developed—by environment.

A child is not born with capacities, but only with potentialities, or possibilities, for good or evil, which may or may not be developed—by environment.

A child is born absolutely without knowledge. Every atom of knowledge he gets must be got from his environment.

Every faculty of body or of mind grows stronger with use and weaker with disuse. This is as true of the reason and the will as of the muscles.

The sailor has better sight than the townsman, because his eyes get better exercise. The blind have sharper ears than ours, because they depend more on their hearing.

Exercise of the mind "alters the arrangement of the grey matter of the brain," and so alters the morals, the memory, and the reasoning powers.

Just as dumb-bells, rowing, or delving develop the muscles, thought, study, and conversation develop the brain.

And everything that changes, or develops, muscle or brain is a part of our environment.

There must be bounds to the powers of environment, but no man has yet discovered the limits, and few have dared to place them wide enough.

But the scope of environment is undoubtedly so great, as I shall try to prove, that, be the heredity what it may, environment has power to save or damn.

Let us think what it means to be born quite without knowledge. Let us think what it means to owe all that we learn to environment.

So it is. Were it not for the action of environment, for the help of other men and women, we should live and die as animals; without morality, without decency, without the use of tools, or arms, or arts, or letters. We should be savages, or superior kinds of apes. That we are civilised and cultured men and women we owe to the fellow-creatures who gave into our infant hands the key to the stored-up knowledge and experience of the race.

The main difference between the Europe of to-day and the

Europe of the old Stone Age is one of knowledge: that is, of environment.

Suppose that a child of Twentieth-Century parents could be born into the environment of an earlier century. Would he grow up with the ideas of to-day, or with the ideas of those who taught and trained him? Most certainly he would fall into step with his environment: he would think with those with whom he lived, and from whom he learnt.

Born into ancient Athens, he would look upon slavery as a quite natural and proper thing. Born into ancient Scandinavia, he would grow up a Viking, would worship Thor and Odin, and would adopt piracy as the only profession for a man of honour. Born into the environment of the Spanish prime, he would think it a righteous act to roast heretics or to break Lutherans on the wheel. Born into the fanatical environment of Sixteenth-Century France, he would have no scruples against assisting in the holy massacre of St. Bartholomew's.

Born a Turk, he would believe the Koran, and accept polygamy and slavery. Born a Red Indian, he would scalp his slain or wounded enemies, and torture his prisoners. Born amongst cannibals, he would devour his aged relatives, and his faded wives, and most of the foes made captive to his bow and spear.

Suppose a child of modern English family could be born into the environment of Fourteenth-Century England!

He would surely believe in the Roman Catholic religion, in a personal devil, and in a hell of everlasting fire.

He would believe that the sun goes round the world, and that any person who thought otherwise was a child of the devil, and ought to be broiled piously and slowly at a fire of green faggots.

He would accept slave-dealing, witch-burning, the Star Chamber, the whipping-post, the pillory, and the forcing of evidence by torture, as comfortably as we now accept the cat-o'-nine-tails, the silent system, and the gallows.

He would look upon education, sanitation, and science as black magic and defiance of God.

He would never have learnt from Copernicus, Newton, Harvey, Bacon, Spencer, Darwin, Edison, or Pasteur.

He would be ignorant of Shakespeare, Cromwell, the French Revolution, the Emancipation of Slaves, the Factory Acts, and the Household Franchise.

He would never have heard of electricity, steam, cheap books, the free Press, the School Board, the Fabian Society.

He would never have heard of the Australian Colonies, of the

Indian Empire, of the United States of America, nor of Buonaparte, George Washington, Nelson, Queen Elizabeth, Abraham Lincoln, nor Florence Nightingale.

Not one of these great men, not one of these great things would form a part of his environment.

Nor may we lightly claim that he, himself, would be of a more highly developed type, that his propensities would be more humane, his nature more refined.

For we must not overlook such examples as Alfred the Great, Joan of Arc, Chaucer, Mallory, and Sir Thomas More.

We must not forget that the refined John Wesley believed in witch-burning, that the refined Jeremy Taylor thought all the millions born in heathen darkness would be doomed to eternal torment.

Nor must we forget that many educated, cultured, and well-meaning Europeans and Americans to-day believe that unbaptised babies, and free-thinkers, and unrepentant Christians will lie shrieking forever in a lake of fire and brimstone.

We must not forget that it is now, in the Twentieth Century, that I, an Englishman, am writing this book to plead that men and women, our brothers and sisters, should not be hated, degraded, whipped, imprisoned, hanged, and everlastingly damned for being more ignorant and less fortunate than others, their fellows.

Taken straight from the cradle and brought up by brutes, a child would be scarcely human. Taken straight from the cradle and brought up amongst savages, the child must be a savage. Taken straight from the cradle and brought up amongst thieves, the child must be a thief.

Every child is born destitute of knowledge, and every child is born with propensities that may make for evil or for good.

And the men and women amongst whom the child is born and reared are the sole source from which he can get knowledge

And the men and women amongst whom the child is born and reared are the sole means by which his propensities may be restrained from evil and developed for good.

The child's character, then, his development for good or evil, depends upon his treatment by his fellow-creatures.

His propensities depend upon his ancestors.

That is to say, a child must inevitably grow up and become that which his ancestors and his fellow-creatures make him.

That is to say, that a man "is a creature of heredity and en-

vironment." He is what he is made by a certain kind of environment acting upon a certain kind of heredity.

He does not choose his ancestors: he does not choose his environment. How, then, can he be blamed if his ancestors give to him a bad heredity, or if his fellow-creatures give to him a bad environment?

Should we blame a bramble for yielding no strawberries, or a privet bush for bearing no chrysanthemums?

Should we blame a rose tree for running wild in a jungle, or for languishing in the shadow of great elms?

There are no figs on thistles, because the heredity of the thistle does not breed figs.

And the lily pines, and bears leaves only, in darkness and a hostile soil, because the conditions are against it.

The breed of the rose or the fig is its heredity: the soil and the sunshine, or the darkness and the cold, and the gardener's care or neglect, are its environment.

Let any one who under-rates the power of environment exercise his imagination for a minute.

Suppose he had never learnt to read! Suppose he had never learnt to talk! Suppose he had never learnt to speak the truth, to control his temper, to keep his word, to be courteous to women, to value life!

Now, he had nothing of this when he was born. He brought no knowledge of any kind into the world with him. He had to be *taught* to read, to speak, to be honest, to be courteous; and the teaching was part of his environment.

And suppose none had cared to teach him good. Suppose, instead, he had been taught to lie and to steal, to hate and to fight, to gamble and to swear! What manner of man would he have been?

He would have been that which his environment had made him. And would he have been to blame? Would it have been his fault that he was born amongst thieves? Would it have been his fault that he had never heard good counsel, but had been drilled and trained to evil?

But the objector may say that as he got older and knew better he could mend his ways.

And it is really necessary, strange as it may seem, to point out that he never *could* "know better," unless some person *taught* him better. And the teaching him to "know better" would be a change in his environment: it would be a part of his environment, for which he himself would deserve no credit.

The point is that, since he is born destitute of knowledge, he never could know good unless *taught* good by some other person. And that this other person would be outside himself, and part of his environment.

Now, how could the ignorant child be blamed if some power outside himself teaches him evil, or how can he be praised if some power outside himself teaches him good?

But he would have a conscience? He would be born with the rudiments of a conscience. But what his conscience should become, what things it would hold as wrong, would depend wholly upon the teaching he got from those who formed part of his environment.

In a cannibal environment he would have a cannibal conscience; in a Catholic environment a Catholic conscience; in a piratical environment a pirate's conscience. But of that more in its due place. Let us now examine some of the effects of environment.

Morals and Disease

The brain is the mind. When the brain is diseased the mind is diseased. When the brain is sick the mind is sick.

But the brain is part of the body. We see, hear, smell, feel, and taste with the brain. The nerves of the toes and fingers are connected with the brain; they are like twigs on a tree, of which the brain is the root. The same blood which circulates through the heart and limbs circulates through the brain.

It is only a figure of speech to speak of the mind and the body as distinct from each other. The mind and the body are one.

A wound in any part of the body—a burn, a stab, a lash—is felt in the brain. When the body suffers from illness or fatigue, the brain suffers also. When a limb is paralysed, the real paralysis is in a part of the brain. When the brain is paralysed the man can neither move nor speak, nor think nor feel. When the heart is weak the brain does not get enough blood, and the mind is languid, or syncope sets in and the man dies.

We do not need a prophet nor a doctor to tell us that sickness affects the mind. We know that dyspepsia, gout, or sluggish liver makes us peevish, stupid, jealous, suspicious, and despondent.

We know that illness or weariness turns a sweet temper sour, makes a patient man impatient, a grateful man ungrateful. We know how trying are the caprices and whims of an invalid, and we commonly say of such, "he cannot help it: he is not himself to-day."

But we do not know, as doctors know, how searching and how terrible are the effects of some diseases on the brain. Dr. Lydston, in *The Diseases of Society*, says:

> The old adage, *mens sana in corpore sano,* is too often forgotten. Especially is it ignored by the legislator and penologist. A normal psychic balance and a brain fed with blood that is insufficient in quantity or vicious in quality are physiologic incompatibles. The nearer we get to the marrow of criminality, the more closely it approximates pathology.

That is to say that the sound mind depends largely on the sound body; that a brain fed with diseased blood, or with too little blood, cannot work healthily and well; and that the more we know of crime the closer do we find its relation to disease.

I quote again from Dr. Lydston:

> Despite the scant and conflicting testimony of cerebrologists with reference to the brain defects of criminals, there is so much clinical evidence of the aberration of morals and conduct from brain disease or injury that we are justified in believing that brain defects of some kind affecting the mental and moral faculties is the *fons origo* of criminality. This defect, as already seen, may be congenital or acquired, and may consist of a lack of development due to vicious environment and faulty education, mental and physical.

The fountain from which crime arises, says this authority, is some form of disease, or defect of the brain. And such disease or defect may be inherited, or may be caused by bad environment: by improper teaching, food, and exercise. To feel the full force of this statement we must bear in mind that "children are not born with intellect and conscience, but only with capacities for their development."

Therefore, if the capacities for intellect and morals are *not* developed, we cannot expect to find the intellect and morals.

In other words, we have no right to hope nor to expect that the neglected child will grow up into the good and clever man.

Neither is it reasonable to hope for a cure by pumping moral lessons into a brain in which no moral sense has been developed.

That epilepsy has a bad effect on morals, and that epileptics are often untruthful, treacherous, and dangerous is as well known as

that epilepsy is a form of degeneracy, and is often caused by improper feeding and neglect in childhood.

Hysteria also affects the moral nerves of the brain. Dr. Lydston says:

> Hysterical women often bring accusations of crime against others. The victim is generally a man, and the alleged crime, assault. Physicians recognise this as one of the dangers to be guarded against in their work. Hysterical women in the primary stage of anæsthesia, sometimes imagine themselves the victims of assault. In one well-known case the woman accused a dentist of assault while he was administering nitrous oxide to her. Her husband was in the room during the imaginary assault.

Dr. Lydston tells us that Flesch examined the brains of fifty criminals, and found imperfections in all.

> In twenty-eight he found, in different cases, meningeal disease, such as adhesions, pachy-meningitis, interna hæmorrhagica, tubercular meningitis, leptomeningitis, edema of the pia mater, and hæmorrhagic spinal meningitis; also atheroma of the bisillary arteries, cortical atrophy, and cerebral hæmorrhage. In most cases the pathologic conditions were not associated with the psychoses that are usually found under such circumstances.

How many men have been hanged or sent to prison who ought to have been sent to lunatic asylums? According to Dr. Lydston, very many. As bearing upon that point I quote two passages from *The Diseases of Society,* which "give one furiously to think." The first is from page 172:

> Cases of moral turpitude, *mania furiosa,* and other mental disturbances are met with in which the patient is harshly treated, because of supposed moral perverseness, and only the autopsy has shown how undeservedly the patient has been condemned. When a tumour or other disease of the brain is found in a punished criminal, the case is most pathetic.

The other passage is from page 221, and is as follows:

> If the foregoing premises be correct, vice and crime will be

one day shown more definitely than ever to be a matter to be dealt with by medical science rather than by law.

The "foregoing premises" here alluded to concern the increase in vice and crime through autotoxemia, or unconscious self-poisoning, due to over-strain and other evil conditions of life.

As to this self-poisoning, a few words may be said. It is known that birds who die of fright are poisonous. That is because the violence of the emotion, by some chemical action, evolves poison.

It is also known that when the human system is out of order it secretes poison. This poison affects the brain, and excites the baser passions, or injures the moral sense.

Self-poisoning may be due to the presence of poisonous matter in the system, or to the over-strain, or over-excitement, of business, or trouble.

We all know the effects of violent anger, of violent grief, or violent love, or violent emotion of any kind upon the health. We know also the effect of "worry," and the effects of fatigue and of improper food.

One of these effects is self-poisoning, and one of the results of self-poisoning is brain sickness, resulting often in vice or in crime.

We find, then, that disease may be caused by neglect in childhood, by starvation or improper food, by over-work, by terror, by excitement, and by worry, amongst a thousand other causes.

And we find that disease affects the brain, and very often leads to vice, to crime, to dishonesty, falsehood, and impurity.

And disease is one part of our environment.

A wound or a shock may have a wonderful effect on the mind. A man may slip and strike his head on a stone, and may get up an idiot. A gunshot wound in the neck, a sword-cut on the head, may cause madness, or may cause an injury of the brain which will quite change the injured man's moral nature.

As to the effects of such accidents on the mind there are many interesting particulars in Lombroso's book, *The Man of Genius*, from which I am tempted to quote some lines:

> It has frequently happened that injuries to the head, and acute diseases, those frequent causes of insanity, have changed a very ordinary individual into a man of genius. . . . Gratry, a mediocre singer, became a great master after a beam had fractured his skull. Mabillon, almost an idiot from childhood, fell down a stone staircase at the age of twenty-six, and so badly injured his skull that it had to be trepanned; from that

time he displayed the characteristics of genius. . . . Wallenstein was looked upon as a fool until one day he fell out of a window, and henceforward began to show remarkable ability.

Lombroso also gives many examples and proofs of the influence of weather and climate on the mind; but for these I have no room.

Now, disease, and weather, and climate, and injuries are all parts of environment.

Food

We have seen that one cause of insanity and disease, and of immorality and crime, is degeneration. And we have seen that one cause of degeneration is "insufficient or improper food."

Children who are half starved suffer in body and in mind: therefore they suffer in intelligence and in morals.

Says Dr. Hall, of Leeds:

It matters but little whether a child be born and bred in a palace or a cottage—of pure pedigree or mongrel—if he does not receive a proper supply of bone-making food he will not make a good bony framework, which is the first essential of true physical well-being.

Amongst the poor it is a common thing for children to want food: not to have enough food. This is not the fault of the children, but is due to the poverty of their parents.

But it is common also amongst the poor for children to be fed upon improper food. Quite young infants, babies, indeed, are often fed upon salt fish, rancid bacon, impure milk. Cases are too numerous in which babies are given beer, gin, coarse and badly cooked meat, inferior bread, and tea.

This is not the fault of the children, but is due to the ignorance of their parents.

The results of such feeding, and of such starvation, are weakness, poorness of blood, deafness, sore eyes, defective intelligence, rickets, epilepsy, convulsions, consumption; degeneration and death.

Professor Cunningham says:

One point which is established beyond all question is the remarkable influence which environment and nurture exercise

upon the development and growth of the child, as well as upon the standard of physical excellence attained by the adult. According to the statistics supplied to the British Association Committee, children vary to the extent of 5 in. in stature, and adults to the extent of 3½ in. in stature, according as the circumstances under which they are reared are favourable or otherwise.

Dr. R. J. Collie, M.D., speaking of the mentally defective children in the London Board Schools, says:

In a large number of instances, after the careful individual attention and mid-day dinner of the special schools, they are returned, after from six to eighteen months, to the elementary school with a new lease of mental vigour. These children are functionally mentally defective. Their brains are starved, and naturally fail to react to the ordinary methods of elementary teaching. In a certain proportion of the cases it is the result of semi-starvation.

The headmaster of a large school in London said to a Press representative:

Not 5 per cent. of my 400 boys know the taste of porridge. New bread, and margarine at fourpence per pound, with a scrap of fried fish and potatoes at irregular intervals, is responsible for their pinched, unhealthy appearance and their stunted growth.

Dr. Lydston, in *The Diseases of Society*, says:

The quantity, quality, and assimilation of food pabulum is the keynote of stability of tissue-building. With the source of the architect's own energy sapped by innutrition, and the materials brought to his hand made pernicious or defective in quality or insufficient in quantity, structural degeneracy must needs result. The importance of this as regards the brain is obvious. It bears directly upon the question of the relation of malnutrition to social pathology.

So much has been written and said of late about the evil effects of starvation and improper food upon the health and minds of children, and so much and such strong evidence has been put for-

ward as to the seriousness and the prevalence of the evil, that I need not go more fully into the matter here.

Millions of children are ruined in body and mind, millions of degenerates are made by bad feeding or under-feeding.

And the good and the bad feeding are both part of our environment.

Poverty, Labor, and Overcrowding

As the health affects the brain, and the brain the morals, all healthy and unhealthy influences have a moral bearing.

Bad air, bad water, bad drainage, bad ventilation, damp and dark streets and houses, dirtiness and over-crowding, all tell against the health, against the health of children most seriously, and all help on the deadly progress of degeneration.

Greyness and monotony of life, unclean, unsightly, and sordid surroundings, tedious and soulless toil, all tend to blunt the senses, to cloud the mind, and to oppress the spirit.

Millions of the working poor, who live in great and noisy cities, whose neighbourhoods are vast, huddled masses of sunless streets and airless courts, whose lives are divided between joyless labour and joyless leisure; the conditions of whose comfortless and crowded homes are such as make cleanliness and decency and self-respect well nigh impossible: millions of men, women, and children are here starved in soul as well as in body.

These people, throughout their anxious and laborious lives, sleep in the overcrowded cottages and tenements, ride in the overcrowded and inconvenient third-class carriages, sit in the crowded and stifling galleries at the theatre, are regaled with crudest melodrama, the coarsest humour, the most vapid music. When they read they have the Yellow Press and the literature of crime. When they get to the seaside they spend their brief and rare holiday in the rowdiest of watering-places.

They have no taste for anything higher? True. They have never been taught to know the highest. And their ignorance, and their slums, and their clownish pleasures, are part of their environment. We need not ask whether such environment makes for culture, for joy, for health.

They have no refinement in their lives, these poor working millions. They have no flowers, no trees, no fields, no streams; no books, no art, no healthy games.

Worse than that, perhaps, they are paid neither honour nor respect: they are without pride and ambition; they have no ideals, no hope.

The environment that denies to human beings all pride and honour and hope, all art and nature and beauty, does not make for health, nor for morality.

The straitness of means, the uncertainty of employment, the looming shadow of hunger and the workhouse, send some to suicide and some to crime, but leave the impress of their dreaded and evil presence upon the hearts and minds of nearly all.

We must remember that these poor creatures are human. The difference between them and us is more a difference of environment than of heredity. The hunger for pleasure, for excitement and romance, is as strong in their soul as in ours. Like ourselves, they cannot live by bread alone. Excitement, pleasure of some kind, they must have, will have. The hog is contented to snore in his sty, the cat is happy with food and a place before the fire; but the human being needs food for the soul as well as for the body. And there is ample environment to feed the hunger of the ignorant and the poor for excitement: the environment of betting, and vice, and adulterated drink.

In the poor districts the drinking dens are planted thickly. There is money to be made. And they are blatant and frowsy places, and the drink is rubbish—or poison.

I have seen much of the poor. I could tell strange, pathetic histories of the slums, the mines, the factories: of the workhouses and the workhouse school, and the police-courts where the poor are unfairly tried and unjustly punished.

Let me dip back into some of my past work, and show a few pictures. Here is a rough sketch of the women in the East End slums:

Women in the Metropolis of the World

"Have you any reverence for womanhood? Are you men? If you come here and look upon these women, you shall feel a burning scorn for the blazoned lies of English chivalry and English piety and English Art.

"Drudging here in these vile stews day after day, night after night; always with the wolf on the poor doorstep gnashing his fangs for the clinging brood; always with the black future, like an ominous cloud casting its chill shadow on their anxious hearts; always with the mean walls hemming them in, and the mean tasks wearing them down, and the mean life paralysing their souls; often with brutal husbands to coax and wait upon and fear; often with loafing blackguards—our poor brothers—living on

their earnings; with work scarce, with wages low, in vile surroundings, and with faint hopes ever narrowing, these London women face the unrelenting, never-ceasing tide of inglorious war.

"If you go there and look upon these women, you will feel suddenly stricken old. Look at their mean and meagre dress, look at their warped figures, their furrowed brows, their dim eyes. In how many cases are the poor features battered, and the poor skins bruised? What culture have these women ever known; what teaching have they had; what graces of life have come to them; what dowry of love, of joy, of fair imagination? As I went amongst them through the mud and rain, as I watched them plying their needles on slop-garments, slaving at the wash-tub, gossiping or bandying foul jests in their balcony cages, drinking at the bars with the men—the thought that rose up most distinctly in my mind was, 'What would these poor creatures do without the *gin?*'

"The gin—that hellish liquor which blurs the hideous picture of life, which stills the gnawing pain, which stays the crushing hand of despair, and blunts the grinding teeth of anguish when the child lies dead of the rickets, or the 'sticks' are sold for the rent, or the sweater has no more work to give, or the husband has beaten and kicked the weary flesh black and blue! What would they do, these women, were it not for the Devil's usury of peace—the gin?

"My companion took me to a bridge across a kind of dock, and told me it was known thereabouts as 'The Bridge of Sighs.' There is a constable there on fixed-point duty. Why? *To prevent the women from committing suicide.* The suicides were so numerous, he said, that special precautions had to be taken. And since the constable has been set there, so eager are the women to quit this best of all possible worlds that they have been known to come there at night with a couple of women friends, and to leap into the deep, still water while those friends engaged the constable in conversation.

"Do you understand it? The woman has been wronged until she can endure no more; she has sunk till she can struggle no longer; she has been beaten and degraded until she loathes her life—even gin has ceased to buy a respite; or she is too poor to pay for gin, and she drags her broken soul and worn-out body to the Bridge of Sighs, and her friends come down to help her to escape from the misery which is too great for flesh and blood to bear. It is a pretty picture, is it not? While our sweet ladies are sighing in the West End theatre over the imaginary sorrows of

a Manon Lescaut or repeating at church, with genteel reserve, the prayer for 'all weak women and young children'—here to the Bridge of Sighs comes the battered drudge, to seek for death as for a hidden treasure, and rejoice exceedingly because she has found a grave."

Many of these poor women, perhaps most, are mothers. What kind of environment, what kind of stamina can they give their children?

"Take care of the women, and the nation will take care of itself." Here is another sketch from the *life*, taken in the chain and nail-making districts of Staffordshire.

Britons Never, Never, Shall——?

"In the chain shops of the Black Country the white man's burden presses sore. It presses upon the women and the children with crushing weight. It racks and shatters and ruptures the strongest men; it bows and twists and disfigures the comeliest women, and it makes of the little children such premature ruins that one can hardly look upon them without tears or think of them without anger and indignation.

"At Cradley I saw a white-haired old woman carrying half a hundredweight of chain to the fogger's round her shoulders; at Cradley I saw women making chain with babies sucking at their breasts; at Cradley I spoke to a married couple who had worked 120 hours in one week and had earned 18s. by their united labour; at Cradley I saw heavy-chain strikers who were worn-out old men at thirty-five; at Cradley I found women on strike for a price which would enable them to earn twopence an hour by dint of labour which is to work what the Battle of Inkerman was to a Bank Holiday review. At Cradley the men and the women are literally being worked to death for a living that no gentleman would offer his dogs.

"Thence to the domestic workshops. Old women, young girls, wives and mothers working as if for dear life. Little children, unkempt and woebegone, crouching amongst the cinders. No time for nursing or housewifery in the chain trade. These women earned from 6s. to 9s. a week. Some of them are, I see, in an advanced state of pregnancy.

And what pleasures have these people: what culture and beauty in their lives? This:

"Were they ever so anxious to 'improve their minds,' what leisure have they, what opportunity? Their lives are all swelter

and sleep. Their town a squalid, hideous place, ill-lighted and unpaved—the paths and roads heel-deep in mire. Their houses are not homes—they have neither comfort nor beauty, but are mere shelters and sleeping-pens.

"In all the place there is no news-room nor free library, nor even a concert-hall or gymnasium. There is no cricket-ground, no assembly-room, no public bath, no public park, nor public garden. Throughout all that sordid, dolorous region I saw not so much as one tree, or flower-bed. or fountain. Nothing bright or fair on which to rest the eye.

"But there are public-houses. And in several of them I tasted the liquor, and spilled it on the floor."

Of how many towns and villages in Europe and America might the same be said?

Of how many women are these terrible descriptions true?

In the evidence given before the Royal Commission on Canal Labour, it was stated in evidence that men and women often worked for seven days and nights on the canals, and in the winter.

Some of the witnesses declared that the work was unfit for women, that it was "degrading." The Royal Commissioners could not understand the word degrading, and asked how it could degrade a woman to steer a boat. Here is one reply given by an angry witness:

> Do you think it womanly work to push with a twenty-foot pole a boat laden with 30 tons of coal? If you saw a mother of a family climbing a four-foot wall, you'd think it was no work for women. I have seen a woman knocked into the lock with a child at her breast by a sudden blow of the tiller. I have seen my own sister-in-law climb the lock-gates at one end to go and shut them at the other.

Many of the "cabins" on the narrow boats are about seven feet by five. In such cabins sleep the "captain" and his family; in one case a man and his wife, a girl of ten, a couple of younger children, and two boys of fourteen and sixteen years of age.

Those are a few glimpses of the environment of the women and the children of the poor.

I cannot quit the subject without again telling an experience which hurt me like a wound. It was in a workhouse school: a school where master and matron did the best they could do for the children so unfortunately placed.

Love Hunger

"As we crossed a bridge from one building to another the mas-

ter said something about a fish-pond, adding, 'We do not catch fish here, but we catch a good many mice.'

" 'Have you many mice?' I asked.

" 'Yes,' said he, with a peculiar smile; 'there is hardly one of our big boys but has a live mouse in his pocket.'

" 'A live mouse? What for?'

" 'Well,' said the master, 'human nature is human nature, and the little fellows want something to love. Some time ago the inspector cautioned a boy about putting his hand in his pocket, and ordered him to be still. The boy repeated the action, and as I guessed what was the cause, I called him out. He had a live mouse in his trousers pocket, and was afraid of its climbing out and showing itself in school. He took it out on his hand. It was quite tame.'

"But still more touching was a curious demonstration of the infants as we crossed their playground. Released from the restraint of parade discipline, these little creatures, girls and boys between three and seven years of age, came crowding round us. They took hold of our hands, several of them taking each hand; they stroked our clothes, and embraced our legs. Several of them seemed fascinated by my gold watch-guard (it is rather loud), and wanted to kiss it. I gave one the watch to play with—my own children have often used it roughly—and his little eyes dilated with admiration. They followed us right up to the barrier, and shook hands with us.

" 'That,' said the master, 'is a peculiarity of all workhouse children. They will touch you. They will handle and kiss any glittering thing you have about you. It is because you are from the outside world.' "

What an environment. It set me thinking of the stories I had read about savages crowding round white men who have landed on their shores.

"From the outside world." "Something to love." In England —where some five millions a year are spent on hunting—such environment is forced upon an innocent and defenceless child.

One wonders as to the "hooligan," and the tramp, and the harlot, and the sot; how were *they* brought up, and had they anything to love?

Education

There are many who under-rate the power of environment. But there are few who deny the value of education. And educa-

tion is environment. All education, good or bad, in the home or the school, is environment.

And we all know, though some of us forget, that good education makes us better and that bad education makes us worse. And we all know, though some of us forget, that we have to be educated by others, and that those others are part of our environment. For even in the case of self-education we must learn from books, which were written by other men.

And if we take the word education in its widest sense, as meaning all that we learn, the importance of this part of our environment stares us in the face. For as we are born not with morals, nor knowledge, nor capacities, but only with the rudiments of such, it is plain to every mind that our goodness or badness, our ignorance or knowledge, our helplessness or power, depends to a very great extent upon the kind of teaching we get.

The difference between the lout and the man of refinement is generally a difference of education, of knowledge, and training.

The root cause of most prejudice and malice, of much violence, folly, and crime, is ignorance. There would be no despised and under-paid poor, no slums, no landless peasants, no serfs, were it not for the ignorance of the masses, *and* the classes. The rich impose upon the poor, and the poor submit, for the one reason: they do not understand.

If they were taught better they would do better. And the better teaching would be—improved environment.

It is not enough that people should be "educated," in the narrow sense of the word. Teaching may do harm, as surely as it may do good. All depends upon the things that are taught.

Much of the teaching in our Board Schools, our Public Schools, and our Universities is *bad.*

If teaching is to be "good environment," the teaching must be good.

National or local ideals are part of our environment. We are born into these ideals as we are born into our climate, and few escape their rule.

The ideals of England are not good. To succeed, to make wealth, to win applause—these are not high ideals. To buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest; to make England the workshop of the world; to seize all rich and unprotected lands, and force their inhabitants into the British Empire—these are not great ideals.

But such national ideals are part of our environment, and tell against, or for, the development of our noblest human qualities.

A gospel of greed, vanity, and empire does not tend to make a people modest, nor just, nor kindly. Indeed, it is chiefly because of their greediness for commerce and wealth, and their ambition for empire, that the nations to-day are armed and jealous rivals. And it is chiefly because of their hunger for wealth, and their worship of vain display and empty honours, that the classes and the masses are hostile and divided. Ignorance again: they do not understand.

The force of environment, and especially the uses of education, are stamped upon our proverbs, are bedded deep in universal custom. "Knowledge is power," "As the twig is bent——" "He who touches pitch shall be defiled," "Evil communications corrupt good manners." And what educated parent would allow his children to grow up in ignorance, or would expose them to the evil influences of impure literature or bad companions.

Every church and chapel, every school and college, every book that teaches, every moral lesson, every chaperon and tutor, is an acknowledgment of the power of environment to wreck or save our young.

In practice we all fear or prize the influences of environment—upon ourselves, and upon those we love.

It is when we have to deal with the "Bottom Dog" that we ignore the facts which plead so strongly in his defence.

Personal Influences

Of home influences it is hardly necessary to speak. The blessing of a wise and good mother; the disaster of an ignorant, vicious, or neglectful mother call for no reminder. The influence of husbands and wives upon each other; the transformation wrought by a fortunate or unfortunate love passion in the life of a woman or a man are equally obvious and well understood. So with friendship: most men have known at least one friend whose counsel, conversation, or example has affected the entire current of their thoughts—perhaps has changed the direction of their life. These instances being noted, it remains for us only to remember that the influence of a wife, a lover, a mother, or a friend may be as powerful for evil as for good.

But there are other personal influences as potent, but not so generally nor so wisely recognised. Such are the influences of good or bad books, and of great leaders and teachers—good and bad.

What tremendous powers over the lives and thoughts of mil-

lions were wielded by such teachers as Confucius, Buddha, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Jesus Christ.

How vast a difference was wrought amongst the masses of humanity by Cæsar, Mahomet, Alexander, Oliver Cromwell.

Who can estimate the importance to the world of Copernicus, Galileo, Luther, Calvin, Bacon, Darwin; of Rousseau, Wycliffe, Tyndall, Marx, Homer, Harvey, Watt, Caxton, and Stephenson?

Which of us can assess his debt to such men as Shakespeare, Dante, Shelley, Dickens, and Carlyle?

Then consider our account with the scientists, priests, and lawgivers of Babylon and Egypt. Recall the benefits conferred upon us by the men who invented written language; the wheel, the file, the plough. Think of all the laborious and gradual building up of the arts, the ethics, the sciences of the world. The making of architecture, mathematics, sculpture, painting, agriculture, working in wood or metals; the evolution of literature and music, the invention and improvement of the many decencies, courtesies, and utilities of life; from the first wearing of loin cloths, the fashioning of flint axes, to the steel pen, the use of chloroform, and the custom of raising one's hat to a lady.

All the arts and crafts; the ethics, sciences, and laws; the tools, arms, grammars; the literatures, dramas, and newspapers; the conveniences and luxuries, the morals and the learning—all that goes to the making of modern civilization we owe to the genius, the industry, and the humanity of countless men and women whom we have never seen.

Into all the wealth of knowledge and freedom, of wisdom and virtue they created and bequeathed, we are born, as we are born to the light and the air. But for the labours and the sacrifices of the workers, fighters, and thinkers of the past we were shorn of all our pride and power, and reduced below the social, intellectual, and moral level of the Australian Bushmen.

And yet, to see the airs and graces of many educated and superior persons, one might suppose that they invented and discovered and developed all the knowledge and wisdom, all the virtues and the graces by which they benefit, of their own act and thought. One would suppose, to behold the scorn of these superior persons for their more rude and ignorant and unfortunate brothers and sisters, that *they* had designed and tailored all the moral and intellectual finery in which they are arrayed. Whereas all their plumes are borrowed plumes; all they know they have been taught by other men; all they have has been made by other men; and they have become that which they are through the generosity

and the tenderness of other men and women.

The rich young scholar fresh from Harvard or Cambridge is blessedly endowed with health, and strength, and grammar, and mathematics, a sprinkle of dead languages, and more or less graceful manners. He despises the lout at the plough or the coster at the barrow because of their lack of the benefits given to him as a dole. He forgets that the University was there centuries before he was born, that Euclid, Lindley Murray, Dr. Johnson, Cicero, Plato, and a million other abler men than himself, forged every link of the chain of culture with which his proud young neck is adorned. He forgets that it is to others, and not to himself, that he owes all that makes him the man of whom he is so vain. He forgets that the coster at the barrow and the hind at the plough differ from him chiefly by the accident of birth, and that had they been nursed and taught and trained like himself they would have been as handsome, as active, as clever, as cultured, and very probably as conceited and unjust as he.

For all the mighty dead, and the noble works they have bequeathed us, and all the faithful living, and all the tender services they render us and the shielding love they bear us, are parts of our environment.

And for the blessings these good men and gentle women, with their golden heritage, have wrought in us, we are no more responsible and no more praiseworthy than we are for the flowers of the field, or the constellations in the sky, or the warmth of the beneficent sun that shines alike upon the sinner and the saint.

And since we are but debtors to the dead, but starvelings decked out by charity in the braveries made by other hands, and since we are deserving of no praise for our grandeur and our virtues, how shall we lift up our vainglorious and foolish faces to despise and contemn our less fortunate brothers and sisters, who have been made evil, even as we have been made good, who have been left uncouth and ignorant, even as we have been polished and instructed?

"But for the grace of God," said the tinker of Elstow—but for the graces of environment, say we—there, in the hangman's cart, in the felon's jacket, in the dunce's cap, in the beggar's rags, in the degradation of the drunkard or the misery of the degenerate weed of the slums—go We.

CHAPTER SEVEN
HOW HEREDITY AND ENVIRONMENT WORK

THERE are many who have some understanding of heredity and of environment when taken separately who fail to realise their effects upon each other.

The common cause of the stumbling is easy to remove. It is often said that two men are differently affected by the same environment, or what seems to be the same environment, and that therefore there must be some power in men to "overcome" their environment.

I have dealt with this argument already, showing that the contest between a man and his environment is really a contest between heredity and environment, and may be compared to the effort of a man to swim against a stream.

A given environment will affect two different men differently, because their heredity is different.

But remembering that we are born without any knowledge, and that we are born not with intellect nor conscience, but only with the rudiments of such, it must be insisted that the hereditary power to resist environment is very limited. So much so that we may amend our figure of the swimmer and the stream, and say that no man, howsoever strong and brave, could swim against a stream unless he had learnt to swim.

And the learning to swim is environment, and works against the contrary environment, typified by the stream.

Let us take the case of two children. One has bad and one good heredity. One is a healthy baby, born of moral stock. The other is a degenerate, born of immoral stock. We will call the healthy baby Dick, and the degenerate baby Harry.

They are taken at birth into an environment of theft, drunkenness, and vice. They are taught to lie, to steal, and to drink. They never hear any good, never see a good example.

Harry, the degenerate, will take to evil as a duck to water. Of that, I think, there is no question. But what of Dick, the healthy baby?

Dick is born without knowledge. He is also born with undeveloped propensities. He will learn evil. His propensities will be

trained to evil. How is he to "overcome his environment and become good"? He *cannot*. What will happen in Dick's case is that he will become a different kind of criminal—a stronger and cleverer criminal than Harry.

But, I hear some one say, "we know that children, born of thieves and sots, and reared in bad surroundings, have turned out honest and sober men." And the inference is that they rose superior to their environment.

But that inference is erroneous. The *fact* is that these children were saved by some *good* environment, acting against the bad.

For there is hardly such a thing as an environment that is *all* bad. In the case of Dick and Harry we supposed an environment containing no good. But that was for the sake of illustration.

For the environment to be *all* bad, the child must be prevented from ever seeing a good deed, or reading a good book, or meeting a good man, woman, or child.

Now, we can imagine no town, nor slum, in which a child should never hear nor see anything good. He is almost certain at some time or other to encounter good influences.

And these good influences will affect a healthy child more strongly than they will affect a degenerate, just as the evil influences will affect him less fatally than they will affect a degenerate. Because the poor degenerate is born with a bias towards disease or crime.

Two children may be born of the same parents, reared in the same hovel, in the same slum, taught the same evil lesson. But they will meet different companions, and will have different experiences.

One may meet a good boy, or girl, or man, or woman, and may be influenced for good. The other may chance upon the very worst company.

Let us suppose that two children are born in a Hoxton slum, and that one of them falls under the influence of a Fagin, and the other has the good fortune to meet such a manly and sensible parson as our friend Cartmel! Would not the effects be very different? Yet at first sight the environment of the two boys would seem to be precisely alike.

And we shall always find that the man who rises above his environment has really been helped by good environment to overcome the bad environment. He has learnt some *good*. And that learning is part of his environment. He must have been *taught* some good if he knows any, for he was born destitute of knowledge.

A good mother, a wise friend, a pure girl, an honest teacher, a noble book, may save a child from the bad part of his environment.

It would appear at first sight that two boys taught in the same school, by the same teacher, would have the same school environment. But at a second thought we find that need not be the case.

We know what one bad boy can do in a class or in a room. We may know, then, that the boys who share a class or a room with a bad boy have a worse environment than the boys who escape his evil influences.

It is a mistake to think of heredity as all good, or all bad. It is mixed. We inherit, *all* of us, good and bad qualities.

It is a mistake to think of environment as all good or all bad. It is mixed. There are always good and bad influences around every one of us.

It is a mistake to think that any two men ever did or can have exactly the same environment.

It is as impossible for the environment of any two men to be identical, as for their heredity to be identical. As there are no two men exactly alike, so there are no two men whose experiences are exactly alike.

Good and bad environment work against each other. All kinds of environment work with or against heredity. Different heredities make different natures; different natures are differently affected by similar environments. But the child, being born without knowledge and with rudimentary faculties, is, whatever his heredity, almost wholly at the mercy of his environment.

I hope I have made that clear.

One man is afflicted with colour-blindness, another with kleptomania. The kleptomaniac may be the most troublesome to the community; but is he more wicked than the others?

Why does an apple tree never bear bananas? Because it cannot.

Why does a French peasant never speak English? Because he has never been taught.

Why is an English labourer deficient in the manners of polite society? Because he has never moved in polite society.

Why does not Jones the engineer write poetry? Why does not Smith of the Stock Exchange paint pictures? Why does not Robinson the musical composer invent a flying machine?

Because they have not the gifts nor the skill.

Why does Jarman play the violin so evilly? He has no ear, and has been badly taught. Why does Dulcett play the violin

so well? He has a good ear, and has been taught properly.

Would proper teaching have made a Jarman a proper player? It would have made him a less villainous player than he has become. But teach him never so wisely, Jarman will not play as Dulcett plays. He has not *the gift.*

Is it Jarman's fault that he has no gift? It is not. He did not make his own ear. Whence did he derive that defect of ear? From some ancestor, near or remote.

Is Dulcett's fine musical ear due to any merit of Dulcett's? No. He did not make his own ear; he derived it from some ancestor, near or remote.

Here are four brothers Brown. John Brown is a drunkard. Thomas, William, and Stephen Brown do not drink. Does John deserve censure, and do his brothers deserve praise? Let us see.

Why is John a drunkard? His grandfather was a drunkard, and he was sent as a boy to work in a shop where the men drank. Then how is it his brothers do not drink? Thomas had the same hereditary inclination to drink, and he derived it from the same source. But he worked in an office where all the clerks were steady, and when on one or two occasions he indulged in liquor, a wise friend warned him, and with a hard struggle he escaped from the danger.

William, although the same blood runs in his veins, has escaped the hereditary taint. To use the colloquial parlance, "he does not take after his grandfather." He never felt inclined to take liquor, and although he worked with men who drank, he remained steady without an effort.

Stephen also was free from the hereditary taint. He mixed with men who drank, and he gradually formed the habit, which gradually formed the taste for drink. But he married a good woman just in time, and she saved him. Thus:

John is a drunkard from heredity and environment.

Thomas was a drunkard from heredity, and was saved by environment.

William was always steady from heredity and environment.

Stephen was steady from heredity, almost became a drunkard from environment, and was finally saved by new environment.

John owed his ruin to his grandfather and his shopmates.

Thomas owed his safety to his shopmates, who rescued him from the taint of his grandfather's evil legacy.

William owed his safety to his blood.

Stephen, after being endangered by his companions, was saved by his wife.

Assuming all other conditions to be equal, and all other traits of character similar, how are we to blame one or praise another of these four brothers? Each is what descent and surroundings have made him.

An apple tree cannot bear bananas. A rose tree cannot bear lilies. A rose tree in good soil bears well; a rose tree in bad soil bears poorly. In times of drought the crops perish for lack of water. In rainy weather the hay rots instead of drying.

Let us now consider some of the arguments actually used in denying the power of environment.

Some little time ago the Rev. R. J. Campbell, of the London City Temple, preached a sermon on environment. From a report of that sermon I take the following passage:

> His argument was that it was all nonsense to say that environment made the man. The man who had any manhood in him could rise above and beyond his environment, just as Bunyan soared above his tin kettles.

This is an example of the confusion of mind into which educated men fall when they deal with this simple subject.

Mr. Campbell's first mistake is the mistake of separating heredity from environment. Of course, it is nonsense to say that environment makes the man. But who did say anything so silly?

Heredity "makes the man," and environment modifies him. Having made that clear, let us consider Mr. Campbell's second sentence:

> The man who had any manhood in him could rise above and beyond his environment, just as Bunyan soared above his tin kettles.

Mr. Campbell says: "The man who has any manhood in him." But suppose he has not any manhood in him! Suppose he is a poor human weed born of weeds. Can he bear wheat or roses? And if he only bears prickles or poison, who is to blame? Not the man, surely, for he did not choose his parents nor his nature. Shall we blame a mongrel born of curs of low degree because he is not a bulldog?

A man can only realise the nature that he has, and can only realise that in accordance with environment.

But this same sentence shows that Mr. Campbell does not understand what we mean when we use the word "environment."

For he tells us that a man can rise above and beyond his environment.

Now, a man's environment is composed of every external influence which affects him in any way, from the moment of his birth to the moment of his death.

Therefore a man cannot rise above and beyond his environment until he ceases to exist.

Mr. Campbell cites John Bunyan as a man who "rose above his environment." The fact being that Bunyan's good environment saved him from his bad environment.

From the preface to my edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress* I quote the following suggestive words:

> How was it, one naturally asks, that a man of little education could produce two centuries ago a masterpiece which is still read wherever the English language is spoken, and has been translated into every European tongue? It is not sufficient to answer that the author of the work was a genius: it is necessary to show *what the conditions were which enabled his genius to develop itself,* led him to find the form of expression which best suited its character, and secured for what it produced immediate popularity and lasting fame.

Bunyan was a poor boy of very little education. But he was born with a great imagination, a sensitive nature, and keen powers of assimilation. He was, in short, a born literary genius.

In his youth he got amongst bad companions, and led a lewd and wicked sort of life.

How, then, came he to reform his life, and to write his wonderful book? To listen to Mr. Campbell, one would suppose that the tinker's boy rose against his environment, and without any help for good from that environment. But did he?

We find he served for some years in Cromwell's army. Would the fierce religious atmosphere of Cromwellian camps have no effect upon his sensitive and imaginative nature?

We find that he and his wife read together two religious books: *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven* and Bishop Bayley's *Practice of Piety.* Would such books, so read, make no impression upon his impressionable mind?

We find that he was drawn to go to church. That he was "over-run with the spirit of superstition." Would that affect him naught?

We find that his neighbours at last took him "to a very godly

man, a new and religious man, *and did much marvel* to see such a great and famous alteration in my life and manners."

Beyond this we need not go. The religious soldiers of Cromwell, the pious books and the pious wife, the spirit of superstition, and the godly man, were all parts of John Bunyan's environment, and, acting upon the peculiar nature given to him by heredity, these and other facts of his environment lifted him up, made him what we know, and enabled him to write his glorious book.

Instead of a man who rose above his environment we have in Bunyan a man who was led by one kind of environment to gamble and drink and blaspheme, and by another kind of environment was made into a fanatical religious enthusiast.

John Bunyan was John Bunyan when he played tipcat, and used profane language on the Sabbath. Up to that time the "manhood that was in him" had not saved John Bunyan.

If, as Mr. Campbell suggests, it is the inherent manhood that saves a man, how was it that Bunyan's manhood, up to a certain point in his life, failed to raise him above his environment.

And, when the change came, what was it that brought that change about? Bunyan had only the same manhood: the same manhood which had already been defeated by the environment. How was it that same manhood now served to raise him above the environment?

John Bunyan was the same John Bunyan; it was the environment that changed. It was the pious Ironsides, the pious wife, the godly man, the atmosphere of superstition, that made John Bunyan the profane tinker into John Bunyan the man of religion.

Bad environment got John Bunyan down: there is no doubt of that. Good environment lifted him up. The manhood was the same at both periods. It was the environment that changed.

If ever there was an example of the power of environment to save or sink a man, that example is John Bunyan, tinker and poet.

Another instance of misunderstanding is afforded by Mr. G. K. Chesterton, who, in an article in the *Daily News,* argues against the power of heredity and environment, as follows:

> The well-bred man—literally speaking, that is the man with a heredity and environment much above the normal—can put forth all the cardinal sins like scarlet flowers in summer. He has lands that meet the horizon, but he steals like a starving man. He has had armies of comrades in great colleges, yet he snarls like a hunchback hissed in the street. He has treas-

uries of gold that he cannot remember; yet he goads poor men for their rent like a threadbare landlady in the Harrow Road. He is only meant to be polite in public, and he cannot even be that. The whole system of his country and constitution only asks one thing of him, that he should not be an unpresentable beast—and he often is. That is a type of aristocrat that does from time to time recur to remind us of what is the real answer to the argument for aristocracy founded on heredity and environment. The real answer to it is in two words—Original Sin.

Had Mr. Chesterton understood the subject upon which he wrote the above picturesque but fallacious paragraph, he never would have sent it to the Press. But he is always falling into blunders about heredity and environment because he has never learnt what heredity and environment are.

He seems to think that the West End means good environment, and that the East End means bad environment. He seems to think that noble blood means good heredity, and that simple blood means bad heredity.

And he calls atavism "original sin."

Let us now consider the rather melodramatic nobleman Mr. Chesterton has portrayed for us.

He does not tell us much about the nobleman's environment. He has lands and wealth, and has been to college.

Does it tend to the moral elevation of a man to be like the "Chough" in Shakespeare, "spacious in the possession of dirt"? Are the wise men of all ages agreed that the possession of great wealth is a good environment? Or do they not rather teach that luxury and wealth are dangerous to their possessor?

In so far as this noble was a very wealthy man, I should say that his environment was not good, but bad.

There remains the college. Now, men may learn good at colleges, and they may learn bad. Is not that so? But let us give Mr. Chesterton the credit and score the college down as good environment.

There remains unaccounted for—what? All the life and experiences of a rich young man.

What were his parents like? Did his mother nurse him, or neglect him? Did his father watch over him, or let him run wild? Were his companions all men and women of virtue and good sense? Did he read no bad books? Did he make no dangerous friendships? Did he ever do any work? Was he ever taught that there are nobler ways of life than shooting dumb animals,

seducing vain or helpless girls, debauching at bachelors' parties, playing at bridge, reading French novels, and running loose in the gilded hells of Europe and America?

Because, until we have these and a few thousand other questions answered, we cannot accept Mr. Chesterton's assurance that this wicked nobleman had a good environment.

Then, as to that question of "original sin." Is Mr. Chesterton in a position to inform us that his bold bad peer is not a degenerate? Is Mr. Chesterton sure that he has not inherited a degenerate nature from diseased or vicious ancestors?

No insanity in the family? No gout? No consumption? No drunkenness? No diseases contracted through immorality or vice? All his family for a hundred generations back certified as having united "the manners of a marquis and the morals of a Methodist"?

Quite sure the noble was *not* a degenerate? *Quite* sure that his failure was not due to bad environment instead of to bad heredity?

Then I should advise Mr. Chesterton to study Darwin, Galton, Lombroso, Weissmann, and Dr. Lydston, and he will find that a man of good descent may cast back, or "breed back," to the ape or hog, may be born an atavist; and may be incapable of being a gentleman for the simple reason that he is a wild beast.

In which connection I may remark that in *The Diseases of Society* Dr. Lydston mentions that Benedikt's experiments upon criminal skulls showed that the skull of "the born criminal" (atavist) "approximates that of the carnivora." That is to say, a man may be cursed with a skull resembling that of a tiger.

Is it any wonder that such men, to repeat Mr. Chesterton's poetical simile, "put forth sins like scarlet flowers in summer"?

I am grateful to Mr. Campbell and to Mr. Chesterton for their arguments: they serve the useful purpose of exemplifying the confusion of thought upon this subject which exists in quarters where we should least expect to find it.

As it is of the utmost importance that we should thoroughly understand the relations to each other of heredity and environment, this being a subject upon which there is much stumbling, we shall do well to make quite sure of our ground before we go a step farther.

It is erroneous to speak of "a struggle between a man and his environment," or of a man "rising above his environment."

What we call "a man" is a product of heredity *and* environment. The "man" is largely what environment has already made him.

At the instant of birth a child may be regarded as wholly a product of heredity. But his first breath is environment. The first touch of the nurse's hands is environment. The first washing, the swaddling clothes, the "binder," and the first drop of mother's milk are parts of his environment.

And from the first moment of his birth until the time of his manhood, he is being continually moulded and affected by environment.

All his knowledge, all his beliefs, all his opinions are given to him by environment.

And now, with this in our mind, we can see the absurdity of Mr. Campbell's talk about John Bunyan.

Before his conversion Bunyan was already "a creature of heredity *and* environment." The very conscience of the man, which his wife, and the godly man, and Cromwell's soldiers, and the preachings in the church he frequented, were to awaken, had been created *by* environment.

For a child is born without conscience: with only the rudiments of a conscience, to be developed or destroyed—by environment.

Now let us reconsider the example of our swimmer and the stream. The swimmer is something more than a mere "heredity." He is a man, and he has learnt to swim. Therefore in his battle with the stream of environment he is using heredity *and* environment. For environment taught him to swim.

Let us take another simile. A man is rowing a boat across a bay. The tide, the currents, and the wind may be regarded as environments. All these environments may be with him, or against him. Or the tide may be against him, and the wind in his favour, and the currents dangerous if not avoided.

But "the man" is largely what environments have made him. His knowledge of rowing came from environment, his knowledge of the bay is environment, his knowledge of the run and position of the dangerous currents is environment, the boat and the oars belong to his environment.

And with all the useful and favourable environments, *plus* his hereditary qualities, he fights the adverse environments of the wind, and the tide, and the currents.

Now, let us suppose the sea to be rough, and the tide and wind strong, and against the oarsman. And then let us imagine the cases of two men, one of whom was an expert sailor, in a good boat, well found, and one a landsman, who could not row, who did not know the bay, who did not understand wind and tide, who was ignorant of the currents, who had bad oars and a leaky boat.

It is evident that the sailor would have a chance of getting safely across the bay, and that the landsman would be in grave peril of being capsized, or carried out to sea.

And the difference between the sailor and the landsman would be entirely a difference of environment.

But suppose, farther, that the sailor was of healthy descent, that he was, by heredity, strong, and brave, and intelligent; and suppose that the landsman was a degenerate: weak, nervous, faint-hearted, and stupid; then the difference would be one of heredity *and* environment.

And if the landsman were drowned and the sailor came safely to shore, should we curse and revile the one, and applaud and reward the other. Or should we take the sailor's success as a matter of course, and give our pity to the landsman?

Well: in such a crazy boat, with such useless oars, with such a faint heart, a lack of knowledge and skill, and such a feeble mind, does the "Bottom Dog" put out, to wrestle with the winds and storms, and escape the dangerous currents of life.

And how can we expect the badly bred, badly trained, badly taught degenerate to succeed like the well-bred, well-trained, and well-taught hero?

What Mr. Campbell calls John Bunyan's "manhood"—the manhood that "raised him above his environment"—was largely composed *of* environment.

There never yet has been a hero whose heroism was not in a great measure due to his environment. Let any one who doubts this look back to our suggestions of the fate of a child born into evil environments.

Every man is largely what environment has made him. No man can be independent of environment: but for environment he could never live to be a man at all.

And now let us consider some of the good and evil things environment may do.

CHAPTER EIGHT
GOOD AND BAD SURROUNDINGS

THERE are many who always think of environment as something bad.

We hear a good deal about men who "rise above their environment"; but we seldom hear of men who are uplifted by their environment.

Yet, as I have shown, no man rises above bad environment unless he is helped by good environment.

Those who dread the power of environment cannot have given much thought to the subject.

Instead of being a menace to the human race, the power of environment is the source of our brightest hope.

Environment has shaped evolution, and has raised man above the beasts. Environment has created morality and conscience.

Environment, feared as a power for evil, is also a power for good. If bad teaching, and evil surroundings make bad men; then good teaching, and good surroundings will make good men.

If bad food, bad air, ignorance, and vice, degrade mankind; then good food, good air, knowledge, and temperance will uplift mankind.

If men and women are largely that which environment makes them, then, by improving the environment we can improve men and women.

And here I come into touch with a certain school of dismal scientists who would have us believe that it is useless to improve environment, because men are what heredity makes them, and because we cannot control heredity.

Let us dispose of these pessimists before we go any farther. Happily, the cases in which heredity is stronger than environment are few.

Environment cannot make a model citizen of the "born criminal," or atavist. But good environment will make the worst man better than he would be under bad environment.

Environment cannot make a genius. No amount of feeding, training, and teaching will make an average man into a Shakes-

peare, or a Plato. But good environment will do more for the dullest of men than bad environment will do.

Environment cannot prevent atavism. It may happen that the best of stock will "breed back" to a lower type. It may happen that a criminal or an incapable will crop out suddenly in a line of good and intelligent men and women. But good environment will abolish degeneracy, as certainly as bad environment will cause it.

For the occasional genius we need feel no concern. He will come when heredity produces him; and he is welcome. And for the atavist, or "born criminal," we may be thankful that he is comparatively rare, and may content ourselves with doing the best we can with him, in future, instead of the worst, as heretofore.

I am assuming that the worst type of born criminal is quite hopeless; but I am not sure of that. We can tame wild beasts, and why not wild men?

But the dismal scientists will tell us that even good environment cannot improve the race, because "acquired characteristics cannot be transmitted": which is to say that knowledge cannot be handed down hereditarily from father to son, and that, therefore, all that the best environment can do is to begin at the beginning with each generation, to teach and train them.

I deny that, and will give my reasons. But suppose we admit it. What follows?

Is it not better to teach and to train each generation well, than to teach and train them ill?

If mental and physical culture cannot be handed down; if the children of the educated and the well-developed must be born uneducated and undeveloped, is it not better to have a generation of strong and cultured men and women than a generation of degenerate weeds? Because we cannot, by education, raise a breed of Washingtons and Darwins, and Miltons and Nelsons, are we to content ourselves with a population of hooligans and boors?

If environment cannot permanently improve the breed, is that any reason for making the worst, instead of the best, of the breed we now possess?

And now, as to that question of improving the breed, I claim that environment would improve the breed, and would improve it as it has improved it in the past, by "natural selection."

How do cattle-breeders improve their stock? By breeding from the best animals, and not from the worst.

Men of weak or base moral natures, and men of weak minds and bodies will, I believe, generally reproduce their faults in their descendants. But, to marry, they must find wives.

I said a little way back, "take care of your women, and the race will take care of itself."

Good environment would "take care of the women." The women being properly nursed, fed, taught, and honoured, would select partners who would not shock them morally, nor disgust them physically.

Virtuous, refined, and intelligent women do not, in general—there are exceptions—love and marry men of weak minds, nor men of diseased bodies, nor men of low moral type.

Therefore, given proper environment, the "born criminal" and the mental weakling would not be able to find wives.

But that is not the only way in which good environment would affect the breed. Nearly all degeneration is caused by bad environment, and good environment would stop degeneration, and by that means would improve the mental, moral, and physical average.

It has been suggested, by some of the most dismal scientists, that to prevent the spread of degeneration we should prevent degenerates from marrying. But I think a sounder method would be to stop the production of degenerates, by abolishing the environment that produces them.

As to the atavist, or "born criminal," I would point out that one of the laws of heredity is the tendency to "revert to the normal." That is to say, genius and atavism do not "persist." In a few generations the atavist and the genius have bred back to the average level.

That, as I have pointed out, is due to the mixture of blood by marriage.

Thanks to this law, even the "born criminal" cannot often reappear.

An example of the working of this law is afforded by the descendants of the Australian convicts, who have turned out excellent men and women.

I think, then, that we need not be seriously troubled by the gloomy forebodings of our pessimists. With bad environment human nature has no chance: with good environment human nature will take care of itself.

And now let us look at some of the facts in proof of the magical results of improved environment.

I have before me a newspaper report of an interview with Mr.

George Jackson, secretary of the Middlemore Children's Emigration Homes. This society was founded some thirty years ago, and has since sent out to Canada more than three thousand children from the slums.

The children came from the worst of slums, and from the worst of homes. They are spoken of by the reporter as being rescued from homes "where they are in daily contact with grinding poverty and misery, in an atmosphere of moral and physical foulness, with parents who are drunken, criminal, and inhuman." And of these three thousand waifs *not two in a hundred turned out badly.*

To give an idea of the working of a changed environment in the case of these children, I will quote from the report of the *Birmingham Daily Post:*

> Mr. Jackson's view ranges over some three thousand children of both sexes rescued from the very lowest haunts of misery and vice, picked up forlorn and deserted from the gutters of Birmingham, snatched from the evil influence of parents who had carried active cruelty or passive neglect to such terrible lengths that the retributive hand of human law had at last fallen upon them, from parents who would have deliberately forced their offspring to mendicancy, to thievery, or to prostitution. These three thousand worse than destitute little ones, these infants "crying in the night, and with no language but a cry," who had started their sad lives on the very threshold of that dark door over which is written, "All hope abandon," were rescued by kindly hands and carried into the sunshine. For a time they were fed, and clothed, and schooled, taught that there was something more in life than squalor and selfishness and vice, and then they were taken thousands of miles away from those foul slums in which their eyes had first opened to the murky light, their tender sensibilities first awakened to the bitter lesson of human pain and misery. They were taken to where God's fresh, free air sweeps across leagues of virgin forest and prairie, to where existence is vigorous, it may be, but healthy, and pure, and invigorating, to where conditions are such as to develop strong, self-reliant manhood, instead of debased and neurotic criminality. It was in the complete and sweeping character of the change that lay the wisdom of the scheme. On the lone backwood farmstead of Canada the slum child had no opportunity, even had he wished, of once more coming within the range of vicious influences such as he had

left. There was no temptation to many of the vices with which cruel circumstances had made him so terribly familiar. Heredity of evil was cheated of its chances, and whatever tendencies to good remained were fostered and given full scope for development. Further, the degraded relatives were no longer able to act the part of a millstone around the child's neck, to fetter his every aspiration to a better life, to drag him down or keep him down to their own dark state. . . . Hundreds upon hundreds of prosperous farmers in Canada at this day can look back to the dim past, when they sold matches or papers, or picked up as best they could, in the streets of Birmingham, a few stray coppers to take home to their dissolute parents; to the time when, with empty stomachs and with the rain and snow beating through ragged garments onto their little pinched bodies, they cried through the rigours of winter nights on a sheltered doorstep rather than face the blows and curses which awaited them in the only place which they could call home. They were born to poverty and crime "as the sparks fly upward," and they have lived to thank God for that kindly agency which rescued them from their inheritance of misery.

Of these three thousand children two thousand nine hundred and forty were saved—by a change of environment. Had the environment been left unchanged probably not 2 per cent. would have escaped ruin. As their parents were, so would they have been. Had their parents been rescued in *their* youth only 2 per cent. of them would have failed.

The experience of Dr. Barnado and his friends with the children taken from the slums was very similar. The percentage of failures was small, and the London papers, in their obituaries of the good doctor, speak enthusiastically of the value of his work, and say that thousands of children rescued by him and his agents "are now steady and prosperous citizens beyond the seas." Since Dr. Barnado took up the work over fifty-five thousand children have been saved—by changed environment.

From an article by Mr. R. B. Suthers in the *Clarion* of August, 1904, I quote the following account of the George Junior Republic, an American institution, founded by Mr. William R. George, in 1896.

The Junior Republic is a collection of 100 hooligans, juvenile criminals, and unfortunate boys and girls who live under a constitution based on that of the United States. The govern-

ment is government of the citizens, for the citizens, and by the citizens. Children of all ages are admitted, but the rights of citizenship are not granted to those under 12, and at 21 the juniors are drafted into the great republic outside. Schooling is compulsory up to the age of 16, after which the citizen has the choice of many trades, in the Junior Republic, including farming, carpentering, printing, dairying, or he may be a cook, waiter, store keeper, or office boy. The girls may go in for dressmaking, cooking, and laundry work.

These boys and girls, recruited from the slums and the criminal forcing beds of the great cities, *govern* themselves. They make their own laws, appoint their own officials, run their own gaol, and are practically as free as the citizens of the big republic of which they become full-fledged members when grown up.

Mr. George asserts that he has never known them when administering the law, to give an unjust or foolish decision.

Remember they were hooligans, criminals, and wastrels.

It ought not to be necessary to argue that children well brought up will turn out better than children ill brought up. We all know that such must be the case: we all see every day of our lives that such is the case: we all *know* the power of environment for good as well as for evil. But facts are stubborn things, and the above are stubborn facts.

I have hitherto dealt almost wholly with the environment of the poor, but it is needful also to say something as to the environment of the rich, as Mr. Chesterton's mistakes have shown.

The chief evils of the environment of the rich are wealth, luxury, idleness, and false ideals.

It is not healthy for young people to be brought up to do nothing but spend money and hunt for excitement. It is not good for young or old to have unlimited wealth and leisure. It is not good for men, nor women, nor children, to be flattered and fawned upon. Flunkeyism and slavery degrade and debase the master as well as the servant: the snob lord, as well as the snob lackey.

We have hundreds of religions in the world; but how many teachers of true morality? True morality condemns all forms of selfishness, all acts that are hurtful to our neighbours, to the commonwealth, to the race. In the light of true morality, a rich landowner, or a millionaire money-lender, is a greater criminal than a burglar or a foot-pad; and a politician or a journalist who utters base words is worse than a coiner who utters base coin.

This being so, all the rich are bred and reared in an immoral atmosphere.

But the atmosphere is polluted in other ways. The children of the rich are perverted with false ideals. They are taught to regard themselves as superior to the workers, who keep them. They are taught that it is sport to murder helpless and harmless birds and beasts and fishes. They are taught to toady to those above, and to expect toadyism from those below them. They are given tacitly to understand that it is their lordly right to command, and that it is the duty of the masses to obey. They are allowed to believe that to be born "spacious in the possession of dirt," or free to wallow in unearned money, is honourable, and that to be poor and landless is a proof of inferiority.

They are puffed up with false ideas of value, and suppose that to possess an opulence of pride and a beggarly smattering of useless and often hurtful knowledge, is more creditable than to be capable of making honest pots and pans, and boots and trousers; of laying level pavements, and cutting invaluable drains. They have their unfurnished minds lumbered with immoral ideas of empire, of conquest, of titles, of stars and garters. They are the spoilt children of Vanity Fair, and very many of them are the lamentable failures which their environment would lead us to expect.

No man is educated who has never learnt to do any kind of useful work; no man lives in a good environment who has not been taught to think of the welfare of his fellow creatures before his own, no life is sound, nor sweet, nor moral, which is not based on useful service. Therefore the environment of the rich is generally evil and not good.

These are not the reckless utterances of any angry demagogue. Every word I have written about the evils of idleness, of luxury, of arrogance, of vain-glory and self-love, is endorsed by the teachings of the wisest and the best men of all ages; every word is supported by the records of history, by the known facts of contemporary life; every word is in accord with the new and the old morality.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the environment of the rich "puts forth sins like scarlet flowers in summer."

CHAPTER NINE
THE ORIGIN OF CONSCIENCE

THE religious mind loves mysteries. Conscience has always been set down as a mystery by religious people. It has been called "the still small voice," and we have been taught that it is a supernatural kind of sense by which man is guided in his knowledge of good and evil.

Now, I claim that conscience is no more supernatural than is the sense of smell, and no more mysterious than the stomach.

If conscience were what religious people think it is—a kind of heavenly voice whispering to us what things are right and wrong—we should expect to find its teachings constant. It would not chide one man, and approve another, for the same act. It would not warn men that an act was wrong in one age, and assure them in another age that the same act was right. It would not have one rule of morality for the guidance of an Englishman, and another rule of morality for the guidance of a Turk. It would not change its moral code as the man it is supposed to guide changes his beliefs through education and experience. It would not give such widely different men of the same age and nation.

If conscience were really a supernatural guide to right conduct it would always and everywhere tell man what is eternally right or eternally wrong.

But conscience is changeable and uncertain. It is a magnetic needle that points North at one time and South at another time; that points East on one ship and West on another ship; that points all round the compass for all kinds of travellers on life's ocean; that has no relation to the everlasting truths at all.

Sceptics have pointed out that "conscience is geographical"; that it gives different verdicts in different countries, on the same evidence.

But I shall show that conscience is:

1. GEOGRAPHICAL: that it is not the same in one country as in another.

2. HISTORICAL: that it is not the same in one age as in another.

3. PERSONAL: that it is not the same in one person as in another.

4. CHANGEABLE: it alters with its owner's mind.

And that, therefore, conscience is not a true and certain guide to right, and cannot be the voice of God.

First, as to geographical, or local, conscience. The English conscience looks with horror or disgust upon polygamy, child murder, cannibalism, and the blood feud.

The Turkish conscience allows many wives; the Redskin conscience allows the scalping of enemies; the Afghan conscience applauds the dutiful son who murders the nephew of his father's enemy; the cannibal conscience is silent at a feast of cold missionary; the Chinese conscience goes blandly to the killing of girl babies; the Rand conscience sees no evil in the flogging of Kaffirs and Chinese; the aristocratic conscience is not ashamed of taking the bread from starving peasants and their children; the capitalist conscience permits the making of fortunes out of sweated labour.

Now, cannibalism, murder, cheating, tyranny, the flogging of slaves, and the torture of enemies are all immoral and evil things. They cannot be good things in the East and bad things in the West. But conscience—the mysterious and wonderful "still small voice"—blames man in one part of the world and praises him in another for committing those acts.

Conscience is *local:* it tells one tale in Johannesburg or Pekin, and quite a different tale in Amsterdam or Paris.

And to find out which tale is the true one we have to use our *reason.*

As to historical conscience. What men thought good a few centuries ago they now think bad.

Take only a few examples. Men once saw no wrong in slavery, in trial by wager of battle, in witch-burning, in the torture of prisoners to extract evidence, in the whipping of lunatics, in the use of child-labour in mines and factories, in duelling, bear-baiting, prize-fighting, and heavy drinking.

Not very long ago men would tear out a man's tongue for "blasphemy," would hang a woman for stealing a turnip, would burn a bishop alive for heresy, would nail an author to the pillory by his ear for criticising a duke, would sell women and children felons into slavery; and conscience would never whisper a protest.

Now, it was wrong to burn heretics, and pillory reformers, and work babies to death in the mill and the mine in those days, or it is right to do the same things now.

But conscience now condemns as wrong the same acts which it once approved as right; it now approves as right what it once condemned as wrong.

Conscience, then, differs in different ages. Conscience tells two quite different tales at two different times.

And if we want to find out which tale is the true one we have to use our *reason.*

As to personal conscience. We all know that one man's conscience differs from another. We all know that in any English town on any day there are as many varieties of conscience as there are varieties of hands, and eyes, and feet, and noses.

There are the Nonconformist conscience, the Roman Catholic conscience, the Rationalist conscience, the Aristocratic conscience, the Plebeian conscience, the Military conscience, the Commercial conscience, the Tory conscience, and the Socialist conscience.

One man's conscience forbids him to swear, to eat meat, to drink wine, to read a newspaper on Sunday, to go to a ball or a theatre, to make a bet, to play at cards or football, to stay away from church.

Another man's conscience permits him all those indulgences, but compels him to pay trade union wages, to speak courteously to servants and poor persons, to be generous to beggars, and kind to dumb animals.

A very striking example of this personal difference in the ruling of conscience is afforded by the quite recent contrast between the sentiments of Northern and Southern Americans on the question of negro slavery.

Another equally striking example is the difference to-day between the rulings of the consciences of Socialists and sweaters.

My own conscience, for instance, never chides me for "Sabbath breaking" nor for "neglect of God"; but it would not allow me to grow rich on the rent of slum houses, nor on the earnings of half-starved children, nor on the sale of prurient novels, or adulterated beer, or sized calico.

Now, it is either right or wrong to do all these things. It cannot be right for one man to dance and wrong for another to dance; it cannot be right for one man to bet, and wrong for another man to bet; it cannot be right for one man to draw rents for slum houses, and wrong for another man to draw rents for slum houses.

But conscience tells some men that it is right to do these things, and tells other men it is wrong to do the same things.

Conscience is not the same thing to one man that it is to another man. It praises Brown and blames Jones for doing the same thing. It tells different tales to different men.

An when we want to know which is the *true* tale we have to use our *reason.*

As to changeable conscience. We all know very well that conscience does not keep to one rule of right and wrong even with one man; but that it changes its rule whenever the man changes his belief through teaching or experience.

I need not give many examples of these changes. Every reader can supply them for himself. When I was a boy my conscience pained me severely if I stayed away from Sunday school or neglected to say my prayers. But it does not chide me now for not going to church, nor for not reading the Bible, nor for not praying. Why has conscience thus changed its tone with me? Simply because I have changed my opinions.

But those things could not have been wrong then if they are right now. Conscience has changed. Conscience changes as the mind changes. It tells one tale in our youth, and another in our prime, and perhaps yet another in our decay.

And if we want to know which tale is the *true* tale we must use our *reason.*

And now we find that conscience is different in different nations, in different cities, in different classes, in different persons, in different ages, in different circumstances, in different moods.

And, when we come to think about it, we find that conscience never tells us anything we do not know. It is a voice which always tells us what we do know: what we believe. It does not teach us what acts are right and what acts are wrong. It *reminds* of what we have been *taught* about right or wrong.

It is not a divine voice, for it often leads us wrong. It is not a divine voice, for it is no wiser and no better than ourselves.

What is it? What *is* conscience? Conscience is chiefly *habit:* it is chiefly *memory:* but it is partly, perhaps, inherited instinct.

Conscience is habit. We all know that it is easier to do a thing which we have often done before than to do a thing we have never done before.

We all know that what we call practice improves an organ or power of our body or our mind.

As the proverbs put it: "Use is second nature." "Practice makes perfect."

Most of us know that an organ develops with use and decays with disuse.

If you wish to develop your muscles you must use them. If you wish to improve your memory or to sharpen your wits you must use them.

When a man is first taught to use a rifle he finds to his surprise that he cannot pull the trigger just exactly when he wants it. But in time he does that quite without thought or effort. The muscles of his finger have been "educated" to act with his eye.

Some men, when they first begin to shoot, shrink from the rifle. They fear the recoil or the sudden explosion, and the muscles of their shoulder flinch. If a man gives way to that habit it grows upon him, and he can never shoot straight. The muscles have learnt to flinch; and they flinch.

One man falls into the habit of swearing. The habit grows upon him. The words come ever more readily to his tongue, and he swears more and more.

Now, let us suppose a boy has been taught that it is wrong to swear. In his memory lies the lesson. It has been repeated until it has grown strong. When he hears swearing it shocks him. But the more he hears it the less it shocks him. The words grow more familiar to his ear, just as the sound of a waterfall or of machinery grows familiar to the ear.

Then suppose he swears. That is a very unusual act for him. And his old lesson that to swear is wrong is still firm and ready. It is not his habit to swear: it is his habit to shrink from swearing.

So if he swears, his memory, which has been educated to resent all swearing, brings up at once to his notice the lessons of years.

The same kind of thing is seen on the cricket field. A batsman is playing steadily. He has been trained to play cautiously against good bowling. But he has a favourite stroke. The bowler knows it. He sends a ball very aptly called a "ticer" to entice the batsman to hit, in the hopes of a catch. The desire to make that pet cut or off-drive is strong; but the "habit" of caution is stronger; he lets the ball go by. Or the habit is not as strong as the desire, and he cuts the ball; and, even as he watches it flash safely through the field for the boundary, he feels that he ran a foolish risk, and must not repeat it.

What is it tells him he did wrong? It is his memory: his memory, which has been educated to check his rashness. In fact, it is his cricketer's conscience that warns him.

So with the youth who swears. No sooner has the word passed

his lips than his educated memory, which has been trained to check swearing, brings up the lesson, and confronts him with it.

But let him swear again and again, and in time the moral lessons in his memory will be overlaid by the familiar sound of curses; the habit of flinching from an oath will grow weak, and the habit of using oaths will grow strong.

It is really what happens with the rifleman who gives way to the recoil and forms a habit of flinching, or with the cricketer who allows his desire to score to overcome his habit of caution. The old habit fades from disuse; the new habit grows strong from use. The rifleman becomes a hopelessly bad shot; the batsman degenerates into a slogger: the young man swears every time he speaks, and his conscience loses all power to check him.

Take the case of the letter "h." The young Lochinvar who comes out of the West sounds his aitches properly and easily—just as properly and as easily as a fencer makes his parries, as a pianist strikes the right notes, as C. B. Fry plays a straight bat. It is a matter of teaching and of use, and has become a habit. From his earliest efforts at speech he has heard the "h" sounded, has been checked if he failed to sound it, has corrected himself if he made a slip.

But the young Lochinvar who comes out of the East drops his aspirates all over the place without a blush or a pang. He has never been taught to sound the "h." He has not practised it. He has formed the habit of not sounding it, and it would take him years of painful effort to change the habit.

Now what happens in the case of a letter "h" is what happens in the case of the rifle, of the ticing ball, of the swearing. One man's memory is educated to remind him not to swear, not to slog, not to flinch, not to drop the "h." The other man's memory is not so trained.

And this trained memory we call conscience. It is purely habit: and it is wholly mechanical.

There is a good story of a gang of moonlighters who had shot a landlord, and were afterwards sitting down to supper. One man was just raising a piece of meat to his lips when the clock struck twelve. Instantly he dropped the meat. "Be jabers!" he said, " 'tis Friday!"

That was the *habit* of abstaining from meat on a Friday. It had been drilled into his memory, and it acted mechanically.

Conscience, then, is largely a matter of habit: it depends a great deal on what we are taught. But it is not wholly a matter of habit, nor does it depend wholly on our teaching.

We all know that two brothers, born of the same parents, brought up in the same home, educated at the same school, taught the same moral lessons, may be quite different in the matter of conscience. One will shrink from giving pain, the other will be cruel; one will be quite truthful, the other will tell lies.

And so to go back to our rifleman and our cricketer. Every novice does not flinch from the recoil, every batsman is not prudent. No. Because men are different by *nature*.

Some boys are easy to train; some are not. Some are naturally obedient; some are not. Some are naturally cruel; some are naturally merciful.

The conscience of a boy depends upon what he is by nature and what he is taught.

If the emotion of anger is naturally strong in a boy it will need a better-drilled memory to check his anger than if the emotion of anger were weak.

I do not mean it will need more teaching to curb his "will," but it will need more teaching to build up his conviction that anger is wrong, because the motion resists the teaching.

But in the case of a boy gentle and merciful by nature it needs no teaching to prevent him from torturing frogs, and very little to make him know that to torture frogs is wrong.

It is a common mistake in morals to say that a man is to blame for an act because he "knew it was wrong." He may have been told that it was wrong. But until he *feels* that it is wrong, and *believes* that it is wrong, it is not true to say that he knows it *is* wrong; for he may only know that some other person says it is wrong, which is a very different thing.

For instance, it might be said in this way that I am wicked for listening to Beethoven on the Sabbath, "because I know that it is wrong." But I do not know that is wrong. I do not believe that it is wrong. I only know that some people say it is wrong.

So I claim that conscience is what a man's nature and teaching make it: that it is a habit of memory, and no more mysterious than the habit of smoking, or dropping the aspirate, or eating peas with a knife.

Let us now look at some of the scientific evidence.

Science and Conscience

I will quote first from Darwin, "Descent of Man," Chapter 4:

The following proposition seems to me in a high degree prob-

able, namely, that any animal whatever, endowed with well-marked social instincts, the parental and filial affections being here included, would inevitably acquire a moral sense or conscience as soon as its intellectual powers had become as well, or nearly as well, developed as in man. . . . *Secondly*, as soon as the mental faculties had become highly developed, images of all past actions and motives would be incessantly passing through the brain of each individual; and that feeling of dissatisfaction, or even misery, which invariably results, as we shall hereafter see, from any unsatisfied instinct would arise as often as it was perceived that the enduring and always present social instinct, had yielded to some other instinct, at the time stronger, but neither enduring in its nature nor leaving behind it a very vivid impression.

Now let us see what Darwin means. The social instincts include human sympathy and the desire for the company of our fellows; love of approbation, which is the desire to be loved, or to be thought well of, by our fellows; and gratitude, which is the love we pay back for the love which is given us.

These social instincts are sometimes so strong, even in animals, as to overcome the powerful maternal instinct; so that migratory birds, as Darwin shows, and as we all know who have read our Gilbert White, will go with the flock and leave their new broods defenceless and unprovided for.

The social instincts, then, are very strong, and they lead us to conform to social rule or sentiment.

But now Darwin tells us that in the case of man "images of all past actions and motives would be incessantly passing through the brain." These "images" are mental pictures, and they are printed on those brain cells which make what we call "memory."

Now, Darwin tells us that these memory pictures would cause us pain as often as they reminded us that we had broken the social rule or outraged the social sentiment in order to indulge some instinct of a selfish kind.

And Darwin makes it clear to us that such a selfish desire may be strong before it is gratified, and may yet leave an impression of pleasure after it is gratified which is weak indeed in presence of the deep-rooted social memories.

Let us take a few examples. The desire for a pleasure may be strong enough to drive us to enjoy it, and yet the pleasure may seem to us not worth the cost or trouble after the desire has been sated. When we are hungry the desire for food is intense.

After we have eaten we are no longer hungry. But we grow hungry again, and then the desire for food is as intense as ever.

Dick Swiveller goes to a bachelor party, and the desire for the convivial glass is strong within him. He drinks too much, and the next morning calls himself a fool for drinking. He is ashamed of his excess, and he has the headache, and the temptation is now absent. But when he is well again, and at another party, the old desire comes back with the old power. So Dick once more indulges too freely in "the rosy," and has another sick head in consequence. And then the social instincts rise up and reproach him, and the sated appetite, being weak, appears to him contemptible.

The social instinct is constant: the selfish desire is intermittent. The passion is like a tide which leaps the moral wall and then falls back to low water. The wall remains: it may be sullied or shaken, but it is still a moral wall, and only a long succession of such tides can break it down. When passion has broken down the moral wall the man is at the mercy of his passions. They flood the dwelling of his soul again and again until he is a ruin.

This, I think, explains Darwin's idea of the struggle between the social and selfish instincts.

In "Adam Bede" George Eliot blames the seducer of Hettie Sorrel for doing a terrible wrong for the sake of a brief selfish indulgence. But that charge is unfair. It implies that the deed was planned and done in cold blood. But the fact was that both Hettie and Arthur were carried away by a rush of passion. The great tide of desire, a desire made terribly strong by Nature, had overleapt the walls of morality and prudence.

Anger has been called a brief madness. The same kind of thing might be said of all the passions. It is as easy to be virtuous after the temptation as to be wise after the event. We can all be brave in the absence of the enemy. The result of a struggle between the sea and a wall depends upon the force of the tide and the strength of the wall. It behoves us all to see that moral walls are builded strong and kept in good repair.

Let us go back to the action of the memory in the making of morals. Dr. C. W. Saleeby, who is doing good work in this field, gives us clear light in his book, "The Cycle of Life." He says:

> Memory means a change impressed more or less deeply on the grey surface of the brain.

A *change.* Those "images" which Darwin tells us are continually passing through the mind have actually made a *change* in the brain. That is to say, they have made a change in the *mind:* they have made a change in the personality.

After showing how a singer learns to produce a note properly by practice until he is almost incapable of producing it improperly, and until its proper production has become mechanical, Dr. Saleeby says:

> The effect of practice, as in any other art, mechanical, mental, or both, has been so to alter the constitution of the nerve cells as to produce a new mode of action.

The nerve cells have been *re-arranged,* and the *habit* of the person has been *altered.* He is no longer quite the same person. He now acts and thinks differently.

Now, these changes in the arrangement of the brain cells and fibres may be looked upon as the building up of the moral wall. And the desires and aversions are like the rising and falling tide.

And the tide of our desires is a tide of nature. Because our desires and aversions seem to work by reflex action. What is reflex action?

Reflex action, as I use the term here, is the mechanical action of the nerves. We do not grow hungry, or thirsty, or angry, or compassionate on purpose: we do not fall in love on purpose. The stomach, working, like the heart and lungs, by reflex action, without our knowledge or direction, uses up the food, and our nerves demand more. The desire for food, for love, for revenge, is due to reflex action. The desire makes itself felt first without our asking, and we have to refuse or to grant its request after it is made.

We do not say: "Behold, there is a pretty face: I will be attracted by it." We cannot *help* being attracted by the face that attracts us, any more than we can help being hungry. The face attracts us, more or less, and we decide to seek out its owner, according to the strength of the attraction and of the reason for resisting the attraction. We see a diamond. We do not say: "There is a diamond. I will not think it beautiful." We *cannot* think it anything but beautiful; but whether or not we shall buy it or steal it depends upon the strength of our desire and the strength of the reasons against gratifying that desire.

Now, let us see how these conflicting ideas act. A man sees a beautiful woman, and desires to see more of her. But he fears

if he sees much of her he will fall in love with her. And he is engaged to marry another woman. What goes on in his mind? Memory reminds him that he is engaged, and that it would be "wrong" to follow his desire. And every time the temptation draws him to follow his desire he calls up the "image" of the other woman, and he calls up the images of old lessons, of old thoughts, of old opinions read and heard by him. And the stronger the temptation grows the more earnestly does he invoke these images. Now, what does all this show? It shows the contest between the reflex action of desire, backed by the memories of love's pleasures, on the one part; and, on the other part, of the moral feelings of memories of what he has learnt or thought to be right and wrong. It is then a battle between memory and desire.

A man is never tempted by a woman who does not attract him. He never steals a thing he does not want. He does not drink a liquor he does not like. The desire must be there before his will is put to the test. And the desire is independent of his will.

A child has no morals. It has only desires. If it likes sugar it will take sugar. If it is angry it will strike. It is only when it is told that to steal sugar or strike its nurse is "naughty" that it begins to have a moral sense. And its moral sense consists entirely of what it *learns*—that is to say, its moral sense is *memory*. And its memory is a *change* in the arrangement of the cells of the grey matter of the brain. And these changes make the brain into a different kind of brain: make the child into a different kind of child.

Now, the child does not teach *itself* these moral lessons. It does not know them. It has to be taught by those who do know. And its moral sense depends upon what it is taught. And its conscience depends upon what it is taught.

And, that being so, is it not quite evident that the conscience is *not* the voice of God; that the conscience is not an innate knowledge of right and wrong born with the child; but it is nothing more nor less than the action of the memory?

The whole of this subject is ably and exhaustively treated by Luys in "The Brain and Its Functions," but I have not room here to go into it fully. Briefly put, the scientific explanation may be expressed thus: The brain cells have power to receive and to *repeat* impressions. When a new sensory impulse arises it awakens these impressions by means of the fibres of association. It is as though the brain were a phonographic "record." Upon this "record" there is printed, let us say, some moral lesson, as "Look

not upon the wine when it is red in the cup." On the word "wine" being heard the association fibre which links the idea of wine to the moral idea of temperance sets the "record" in motion, and memory recalls the caution, "Look not upon the wine in the cup." It is as if a "record" on which is printed a song by Dan Leno were joined up with a battery which, upon hearing the word "Leno," would start the "record" to repeat the song.

I hope I have made that clear. I will now conclude by quoting from Dr. Saleeby a passage dealing with the important subject of "association." I take it from "The Cycle of Life":

> Nerve cells are significantly incapable of division and reproduction. . . . All the experience of living merely modifies the state of the cells already present. The modification is memory. But though a nerve-cell cannot divide, it can send forth new processes, or nerve-fibres from itself—what we call a nerve being simply a collection of processes from a nerve-cell. Throughout the brain and spinal cord we find great numbers of nerve processes which simply run from one set of nerve-cells to another, instead of running to a sense-organ, or a muscle, or a gland. Such fibres are called *association* fibres, their business being to associate different sets of nerve-cells. It is conceivable that an exceptional development of such fibres may account for the possession of a good memory; or, at any rate, for the power easily to learn such co-ordinations as are implied in violin-playing, billiards, cricket, or baseball. Granting the power of nerve-cells, even when adult, to form new processes, it might be supposed that the exercise of this power accounts for the acquirement of certain habits of thought or action.

Now, whether or not nerve-cells have power to form new association fibres late in life, it is important to notice that the association fibres which exist at birth or form in childhood are the means by which one idea suggests another; and the means by which, as I said just now, upon the utterance of the word "wine" all we have remembered to have read or heard about wine is repeated by the memory "record."

And, just as a phonograph record can only repeat the song or speech that is printed upon it, so the memory can only repeat what it contains, and it contains nothing that has not been printed there through the medium of the senses.

That is why the word "marriage" carries with it no moral re-

vulsion against polygamy in the mind of a Turk. The brain of a Turk has no "record" on its grey matter of any moral teaching against polygamy. And the "still small voice" does not make good the absence of the "record," and tell him that polygamy is wrong. This being so, what becomes of the theory that conscience is a mysterious agent of God implanted in the mind of man to guide him to do right and to shun wrong?

A cannibal chief was told by a missionary that it was wicked to have two wives. He went away and *ate* one wife. The missionary had printed on his brain "record" the lesson that to have two wives was wrong; but there was no "record" there to tell him he must not kill one wife and eat her.

Where was the "still small voice," the "divine guide to right conduct"?

CHAPTER TEN

FREE WILL

THE free will delusion has been a stumbling block in the way of human thought for thousands of years. Let us try whether common sense and common knowledge cannot remove it.

Free will is a subject of great importance to us in this case; and it is one we must come to with our eyes wide open and our wits wide awake; not because it is very difficult, but because it has been tied and twisted into a tangle of Gordian knots by twenty centuries full of wordy but unsuccessful philosophers.

The free will party claim that man is responsible for his acts, because his will is free to choose between right and wrong.

We reply that the will is not free, and that if it were free man could not know right from wrong until he was taught.

As to the knowledge of good and evil the free will party will claim that conscience is an unerring guide. But I have already proved that conscience does not and cannot tell us what is right and what is wrong: it only reminds us of the lessons we have learnt as to right and wrong.

The "still small voice" is not the voice of God: it is the voice of heredity and environment.

And now to the freedom of the will.

When a man says his will is free, he means that it is free of all control or interference: that it can over-rule heredity and environment.

We reply that the will is ruled by heredity and environment.

The cause of all the confusion on this subject may be shown in a few words.

When the free will party say that man has a free will, they mean that he is free to act as he chooses to act.

There is no need to deny that. *But what causes him to choose?*

That is the pivot upon which the whole discussion turns.

The free will party seem to think of the will as something independent of the man, as something outside him. They seem to think that the will decides without the control of the man's reason.

If that were so, it would not prove the man responsible. "The will" would be responsible, and not the man. It would be as foolish to blame a man for the act of a "free" will, as to blame a horse for the action of its rider.

But I am going to prove to my readers, by appeals to their common sense and common knowledge, that the will is not free; and that it is ruled by heredity and environment.

To begin with, the average man will be against me. He knows that he chooses between two courses every hour, and often every minute, and he thinks his choice is free. But that is a delusion: his choice is not free. He can choose, and does choose. But he can only choose as his heredity and his environment cause him to choose. He never did choose and never will choose except as his heredity and his environment—his temperament and his training—cause him to choose. And his heredity and his environment have fixed his choice before he makes it.

The average man says "I know that I can act as I wish to act." But what causes him to wish?

The free will party say, "We know that a man can and does choose between two acts." But what settles the choice?

There is a cause for every wish, a cause for every choice; and every cause of every wish and choice arises from heredity, or from environment.

For a man acts always from temperament, which is heredity, or from training, which is environment.

And in cases where a man hesitates in his choice between two acts, the hesitation is due to a conflict between his temperament and his training, or, as some would express it, "between his desire and his conscience."

A man is practising at a target with a gun, when a rabbit crosses his line of fire. The man has his eye and his sights on the rabbit, and his finger on the trigger. The man's will is free. If he press the trigger the rabbit will be killed.

Now, how does the man decide whether or not he shall fire? He decides by feeling, and by reason.

He would like to fire, just to make sure that he could hit the mark. He would like to fire, because he would like to have the rabbit for supper. He would like to fire, because there is in him the old, old hunting instinct, to kill.

But the rabbit does not belong to him. He is not sure that he will not get into trouble if he kills it. Perhaps—if he is a very uncommon kind of man—he feels that it would be cruel and cowardly to shoot a helpless rabbit.

Well. The man's will is free. He can fire if he likes: he can let the rabbit go if he likes. How will he decide? On what does his decision depend?

His decision depends upon the relative strength of his desire to kill the rabbit, and of his scruples about cruelty, and the law.

Not only that, but, if we knew the man fairly well, we could guess how his free will would act before it acted. The average sporting Briton would kill the rabbit. But we know that there are men who would on no account shoot any harmless wild creature.

Broadly put, we may say that the sportsman would will to fire, and that the humanitarian would not will to fire.

Now, as both their wills are free, it must be something outside the wills that makes the difference.

Well. The sportsman will kill, because he is a sportsman: the humanitarian will not kill, because he is a humanitarian.

And what makes one man a sportsman and another a humanitarian? Heredity and environment: temperament and training.

One man is merciful, another cruel, by nature; or one is thoughtful and the other thoughtless, by nature. That is a difference of heredity.

One may have been taught all his life that to kill wild things is "sport"; the other may have been taught that it is inhuman and wrong: that is a difference of environment.

Now, the man by nature cruel or thoughtless, who has been trained to think of killing animals as sport, becomes what we call a sportsman, because heredity and environment have made him a sportsman.

The other man's heredity and environment have made him a humanitarian.

The sportsman kills the rabbit, because he is a sportsman, and he is a sportsman because heredity and environment have made him one.

That is to say the "free will" is really controlled by heredity and environment.

Allow me to give a case in point. A man who had never done any fishing was taken out by a fisherman. He liked the sport, and for some months followed it eagerly. But one day an accident brought home to his mind the cruelty of catching fish with a hook, and he instantly laid down his rod, and never fished again.

Before the change he was always eager to go fishing if invited: after the change he could not be persuaded to touch a line. His will was free all the while. How was it that his will to fish

changed to his will not to fish? It was the result of environment. He had learnt that fishing was cruel. This knowledge controlled his will.

But, it may be asked, how do you account for a man doing the thing he does not wish to do?

No man ever did a thing he did not wish to do. When there are two wishes the stronger rules.

Let us suppose a case. A young woman gets two letters by the same post; one is an invitation to go with her lover to a concert, the other is a request that she will visit a sick child in the slums. The girl is very fond of music, and is rather afraid of the slums. She wishes to go to the concert, and to be with her lover; she dreads the foul street and the dirty home, and shrinks from the risk of measles or fever. But she goes to the sick child, and she foregoes the concert. Why?

Because her sense of duty is stronger than her self-love.

Now, her sense of duty is partly due to her nature—that is, to her heredity—but it is chiefly due to environment. Like all of us, this girl was born without any kind of knowledge, and with only the rudiments of a conscience. But she has been well taught, and the teaching is part of her environment.

We may say that the girl is free to act as she chooses, but she *does* act as she has been *taught* that she *ought* to act. This teaching, which is part of her environment, controls her will.

We may say that a man is free to act as he chooses. He is free to act as *he* chooses, but *he* will choose as heredity and environment cause *him* to choose. For heredity and environment have made him that which he is.

A man is said to be free to decide between two courses. But really he is only free to decide in accordance with his temperament and training.

Brown is a Member of Parliament. He is given to understand that by suppressing his principles he may get a seat in the next Cabinet.

Brown is very anxious to get into the Cabinet. He is ambitious. His wife is ambitious. He wants to make a name; he wants to please his wife. But he has been taught that to sacrifice one's principles for a bribe is disgraceful.

Now, his ambition is part of his heredity; the things he has been taught are part of his environment.

The conflict in his mind is a conflict between the old Adam and the new; between the older egotism and the newer altruism. It is a conflict between good heredity and bad heredity; between

heredity and environment; and the victory will be to the stronger.

If Brown is very ambitious, and not very conscientious, he will take the bribe. If his conscience is stronger than his ambition, he will refuse it. But to say that he is free to choose is a misuse of terms: he is only free to decide as the stronger of the two motives compels him to decide. And the motives arise from heredity and environment.

Macbeth was ambitious; but he had a conscience. He wanted Duncan's crown; but he shrank from treason and ingratitude. Ambition pulled him one way, honour pulled him the other way. The opposing forces were so evenly balanced that he seemed unable to decide. Was Macbeth free to choose? To what extent was he free? He was so free that he could arrive at no decision, and it was the influence of his wife that turned the scale to crime.

Was Lady Macbeth free to choose? She did not hesitate. Because her ambition was so much stronger than her conscience that she never was in doubt. She chose as her over-powering ambition compelled her to choose.

And most of us in our decisions resemble either Macbeth or his wife. Either our nature is so much stronger than our training, or our training is so much stronger than our nature, that we decide for good or evil as promptly as a stream decides to run down hill; or our nature and our training are so nearly balanced that we can hardly decide at all.

In Macbeth's case the contest is quite clear and easy to follow. He was ambitious, and his environment had taught him to regard the crown as a glorious and desirable possession. But environment had also taught him that murder, and treason, and ingratitude were wicked and disgraceful.

Had he never been taught these lessons, or had he been taught that gratitude was folly, that honour was weakness, and murder excusable when it led to power, he would not have hesitated at all. It was his environment that hampered his will.

We may say that Wellington was free to take a bribe. But his heredity and environment had only left him free to refuse one. Everyone who knew the Iron Duke knew how his free will would act if a bribe were offered him.

We may say that Nelson was free to run away from an enemy. But we know that Nelson's nature and training had left him free only to run after an enemy. All the world knew before the event how Nelson's free will would act when a hostile fleet hove into view. Heredity and enrivonment had settled the action of Nelson's free will in that matter before the occasion to act arose.

We may say that Nelson's will was free in the case of Lady Hamilton. But it seems only to have been free to do as Lady Hamilton wished.

When Nelson met an enemy's fleet, he made haste to give them battle; when he met Lady Hamilton he struck his flag. Some other man might have been free to avoid a battle; some other man might have been free to resist the fascinations of a friend's wife. Horatio Nelson was only free to act as *his* nature and *his* training compelled *him* to act. To Nelson honour was dearer than life; but Lady Hamilton was dearer than honour.

Nelson's action in Lady Hamilton's case was largely due to the influence of environment. To hesitate in war was universally regarded as shameful. But, in Nelson's environment, a love intrigue was condoned as an amiable human weakness. Hence the failure of Nelson's will and conscience to resist the blandishments of the handsome Emma.

We may say that Jack Sheppard and Cardinal Manning were free to steal, or to refrain from stealing. But we know that the heredity and environment of the thief had made robbery, for him, a proof of prowess, and a question of the value of the spoil; and we know that the Cardinal would not have stolen the Crown jewels if he could; that he did not want them, and would not have taken them if he had wanted them.

We say that a drunkard and a lifelong abstainer are free to drink or to refuse a glass of whisky. But we know that in both cases the action of the free will is a foregone conclusion.

In all cases the action of the will depends upon the relative strength of two or more motives. The stronger motive decides the will; just as the heavier weight decides the balance of a pair of scales.

In Macbeth's case the balance seemed almost even: Lady Macbeth's persuasion brought down the scale on the wrong side.

If the will were free, it would be independent of the temperament and training, and so would act as freely in one case as in another. So that it would be as easy for the drunkard as for the lifelong abstainer to refuse to drink; as easy for the thief as for the Cardinal to be honest; as easy for Macbeth as for Lady Macbeth to seal the fate of Duncan.

But we all know that it is harder for one man than for another to be sober, or honest, or virtuous; and we all know that the sobriety, or honesty, or virtue of any man depends upon his temperament and training; that is to say, upon his heredity and his environment.

How, then, can we believe that free will is outside and superior to heredity and environment?

In the case of the slum children rescued by Dr. Barnado and others we know that had they been left in the slums their wills would have willed evil, and we know that when taken out of the slums their wills willed good.

There was no change in the freedom of the will; the will that is free in Whitechapel is free in Manitoba. The difference was the environment. In Canada as in London the environment controlled the will.

"What! Cannot a man be honest if he choose?" Yes, if he choose. But that is only another way of saying that he can be honest if his nature and his training lead him to choose honesty.

"What! Cannot I please myself whether I drink or refrain from drinking?" Yes. But that is only to say you will not drink because it pleases *you* to be sober. But it pleases another man to drink, because his desire for drink is strong, or because his self-respect is weak.

And you decide as you decide, and he decides as he decides, because you are *you,* and he is *he;* and heredity and environment made you both that which you are.

And the sober man may fall upon evil days, and may lose his self-respect, or find the burden of his trouble greater than he can bear, and may fly to drink for comfort, or oblivion, and may become a drunkard. Has it not been often so?

And the drunkard may, by some shock, or some disaster, or some passion, or some persuasion, regain his self-respect, and may renounce drink, and lead a sober and useful life. Has it not been often so?

And in both cases the freedom of the will is untouched: it is the change in the environment that lifts the fallen up, and beats the upright down.

We might say that a woman's will is free, and that she could, if she wished, jump off a bridge and drown herself. But she cannot *wish.* She is happy, and loves life, and dreads the cold and crawling river. And yet, by some cruel turn of fortune's wheel, she may become destitute and miserable; so miserable that she hates life and longs for death, and *then* she can jump into the dreadful river and die.

Her will was free at one time as at another. It is the environment that has wrought the change. Once she could not wish to die: now she cannot wish to live.

The apostles of free will believe that all men's wills are free.

But a man can only will that which he is able to will. And one man is able to will that which another man is unable to will. To deny this is to deny the commonest and most obvious facts of life.

The will is as free in one nation and in one class as in another. Who would more willingly return a blow, an Irish soldier, or an English Quaker? Who would be readier to stab a rival, an English curate, or a Spanish smuggler? The difference does not concern the freedom of the will: it is a difference of heredity and environment.

The wills of a priest and a sailor are free—free to make love in every port, and to swear in every breeze. The difference is one of environment.

The free will party look upon a criminal as a bad man, who could be good if he wished: *but he cannot wish.*

The free will party say that if Smith wills to drink he is bad. But we say that Smith drinks, and to drink is bad; but Smith drinks because he is Smith.

The free will party say, "then he was born bad." But we say "no: he was born Smith."

We all know that we can foretell the action of certain men in certain cases, because we know the men.

We know that under the same conditions Jack Sheppard would steal and Cardinal Manning would not steal. We know that under the same conditions the sailor would flirt with the waitress, and the priest would not; that the drunkard would get drunk, and the abstainer would remain sober. We know that Wellington would refuse a bribe, that Nelson would not run away, that Buonaparte would grasp at power, that Abraham Lincoln would be loyal to his country, that Torquemada would not spare a heretic. Why? If the will is free, how can we be sure, before a test arises, how the will must act?

Simply because we know that heredity and environment have so formed and moulded men and women that under certain circumstances the action of their wills is certain.

Heredity and environment having made a man a thief, he will steal. Heredity and environment having made a man honest, he will not steal.

That is to say, heredity and environment have decided the action of the will, before the time has come for the will to act.

This being so—and we all know that it is so—what becomes of the sovereignty of the will?

Let any man that believes that he can "do as he likes" ask him-

self *why* he *likes*, and he will see the error of the theory of free will, and will understand why the will is the servant and not the maser of the man: for the man is the product of heredity and environment, and these control the will.

As we want to get this subject as clear as we can, let us take one or two familiar examples of the action of the will.

Jones and Robinson meet and have a glass of whisky. Jones asks Robinson to have another. Robinson says, "no thank you, one is enough." Jones says, "all right: have another cigarette." Robinson takes the cigarette. Now, here we have a case where a man refuses a second drink, but takes a second smoke. Is it because he would like another cigarette, but would not like another glass of whisky? No. It is because he knows that it is *safer* not to take another glass of whisky.

How does he know that whisky is dangerous? He has learnt it—from his environment.

"But he *could* have taken another glass if he wished."

But he could not wish to take another, because there was something he wished more strongly—to be safe.

And why did he want to be safe? Because he had learnt—from his environment—that it was unhealthy, unprofitable, and shameful to get drunk. Because he had learnt—from his environment—that it is easier to avoid forming a bad habit than to break a bad habit when formed. Because he valued the good opinion of his neighbours, and also his position and prospects.

These feelings and this knowledge ruled his will, and caused him to refuse the second glass.

But there was no sense of danger, no well-learned lesson of risk to check his will to smoke another cigarette. Heredity and environment did not warn him against that. So, to please his friend, and himself, he accepted.

Now suppose Smith asks Williams to have another glass. Williams takes it, takes several, finally goes home—as he often goes home. Why?

Largely because drinking is a habit with him. And not only does the mind instinctively repeat an action, but, in the case of drink, a physical craving is set up, and the brain is weakened. It is easier to refuse the first glass than the second; easier to refuse the second than the third; and it is very much harder for a man to keep sober who has frequently got drunk.

So, when poor Williams has to make his choice, he has habit against him, he has a physical craving against him, and he has a weakened brain to think with.

"But Williams could have refused the first glass."

No. Because in his case the desire to drink, or to please a friend, was stronger than his fear of the danger. Or he may not have been so conscious of the danger as Robinson was. He may not have been so well taught, or he may not have been so sensible, or he may not have been so cautious. So that his heredity and environment, his temperament and training, led him to take the drink, as surely as Robinson's heredity and environment led him to refuse it.

And now, it is my turn to ask a question. If the will is "free," if conscience is a sure guide, how is it that the free will and the conscience of Robinson caused him to keep sober, while the free will and the conscience of Williams caused him to get drunk?

Robinson's will was curbed by certain feelings which failed to curb the will of Williams. Because in the case of Williams the feelings were stronger on the other side.

It was the nature and the training of Robinson which made him refuse the second glass, and it was the nature and the training of Williams which made him drink the second glass.

What had free will to do with it?

We are told that *every* man has a free will, and a conscience.

Now, if Williams had been Robinson, that is to say if his heredity and his environment had been exactly like Robinson's, he would have done exactly as Robinson did.

It was because his heredity and environment were not the same that his act was not the same.

Both men had free wills. What made one do what the other refused to do?

Heredity and environment. To reverse their conduct we should have to reverse their heredity and environment.

Let us take another familiar instance. Bill Hicks is a loafer. He "doesn't like work." He used to work, but he was out on strike for six months, and since then he has done no more work than he could help. What has changed this man's free will to work into a free will to avoid work?

Hicks used to work. He was a steady young fellow. Why did he work? He did not know. He had always worked. He went to work just as he ate his dinner, or washed his hands. But he did not think much. He lived chiefly by custom; habit. He did things because he had always done them, and because other men did them. He knew no other way.

He worked. He worked hard: for nine hours a day. He got twenty-five shillings a week. He paid twelve shillings for lodg-

ing and board, and he spent the rest, as others spent it, on similar boots and coats, and a better suit, and the usual amount of beer and tobacco, and the usual music hall.

He thought those things were necessary, or rather he felt that they were.

He did not love his work. There was no interest in it. It was hard, it was dirty, there was no credit to be got by doing it. It was just an affair of habit—and wages.

Then he was half a year on strike. He had less food, and less beer, and no music hall. But he had a very great deal less work, and more liberty, and—no "boss."

Men love liberty. It is a love that is bred in the race. They do not love shovelling clay into a barrow, and pushing the barrow up a plank. There is nothing in it that appeals to their humanity: and it is dirty, and laborious, and it makes a man a prisoner and a slave.

Hicks found that the difference between working and loafing was a difference of food, clothing, and beer, on the one hand, and on the other hand, of unpleasant and hard labour.

He found he could do with much less beer and beef, and that liberty was sweet. He did not think this out. He seldom thought: he was never trained to think. But the habit of toil was broken, and the habit of freedom was formed. Also he had found out that he could live without so much toil, and live more pleasantly, if more sparely.

What had changed the free will of Hicks from a will to work to a will to loaf? Change of experience: change of environment.

Now Hicks is as lazy, as useless, and as free as a duke.

But, someone asks, "where was his pride; where was his sense of duty; where was his manhood?" And it seems to me those questions ought to be put to the duke. But I should say that Bill Hicks' pride and sense of duty were just overpowered by his love of liberty, his distaste for soulless toil, and his forgetfulness of the beautiful moral lesson that a man who will not work like a horse for a pound a week is a lazy beast, whilst the man who does nothing—except harm—for a hundred thousand a year, is an honourable gentleman, with a hereditary seat in the House of Peers.

In fact Hicks had found his heredity too strong for his training. But what had free will to do with it?

The duke has a free will. Does it ever set him wheeling clay up a plank? No. Why not? Because, as in the case of Hicks, heredity and environment cause the duke to love some other things better than toil.

"But the duke has no need to work." That is how Hicks feels. "But Hicks could work if he liked." So could the duke. But neither of these men *can* "like." That is just what is the matter with them both.

Two boys work at a hard and disagreeable trade. One leaves it, finds other work, "gets on," is praised for getting on. The other stays at the trade all his life, works hard all his life, is poor all his life, and is respected as an honest and humble working man; that is to say, he is regarded by society as Mr. Dorgan was regarded by Mr. Dooley—"he is a fine man, and I despise him."

What causes these two free wills to will so differently? One boy knew more than the other boy. He "knew better." All knowledge is environment. Both boys had free wills. It was in knowledge they differed: environment!

Those who exalt the power of the will, and belittle the power of environment, belie their words by their deeds.

For they would not send their children amongst bad companions or allow them to read bad books. They would not say the children have free will and therefore have power to take the good and leave the bad.

They know very well that evil environment has power to pervert the will, and that good environment has power to direct it properly.

They know that children may be made good or bad by good or evil training, and that the will follows the training.

That being so, they must also admit that the children of other people may be made good or bad by training.

And if a child gets bad training, how can free will save it? Or how can it be blamed for being bad? It never had a chance to be good. That they know this is proved by their carefulness in providing their own children with better environment.

As I have said before, every church, every school, every moral lesson is a proof that preachers and teachers trust to good environment, and not to free will, to make children good.

In this, as in so many other matters, actions speak louder than words.

That, I hope, disentangles the many knots into which thousands of learned men have tied the simple subject of free will; and disposes of the claim that man is responsible because his will is free. But there is one other cause of error, akin to the subject, on which I should like to say a few words.

We often hear it said that a man is to blame for his conduct because "he knows better."

It is true that men do wrong when they know better. Macbeth "knew better" when he murdered Duncan. But it is true, also, that we often think a man "knows better," when he does not know better.

For a man cannot be said to know a thing until he believes it. If I am told that the moon is made of green cheese, it cannot be said that I *know* it to be made of green cheese.

Many moralists seem to confuse the words "to know" with the words "to hear."

Jones reads novels and plays opera music on Sunday. The Puritan says Jones "knows better," when he means that Jones has been told that it is wrong to do those things.

But Jones does not know that it is wrong. He has heard someone say that it is wrong, but does not believe it. Therefore it is not correct to say that he knows it.

And, again, as to that matter of belief. Some moralists hold that it is wicked not to believe certain things, and that men who do not believe those things will be punished.

But a man cannot believe a thing he is told to believe: he can only believe a thing which he *can* believe; and he can only believe that which his own reason tells him is true.

It would be no use asking Sir Roger Ball to believe that the earth is flat. He *could not* believe it.

It is no use asking an agnostic to believe the story of Jonah and the whale. He *could not* believe it. He might pretend to believe it. He might try to believe it. But his reason would not allow him to believe it.

Therefore it is a mistake to say that a man "knows better," when the fact is that he has been told "better" and cannot believe what he has been told.

That is a simple matter, and looks quite trivial; but how much ill-will, how much intolerance, how much violence, persecution, and murder have been caused by the strange idea that a man is wicked because *his* reason *cannot* believe that which to another man's reason seems quite true.

Free will has no power over a man's belief. A man cannot believe by will, but only by conviction. A man cannot be forced to believe. You may threaten him, wound him, beat him, burn him; and he may be frightened, or angered, or pained; but he cannot *believe*, nor can he be made to believe. Until he is convinced.

Now, truism as it may seem, I think it necessary to say here that a man cannot be convinced by abuse, nor by punishment. He can only be convinced by *reason*.

Yes. If we wish a man to believe a thing, we shall find a few words of reason more powerful than a million curses, or a million bayonets. To burn a man alive for failing to believe that the sun goes round the world is not to convince him. The fire is searching, but it does not seem to him to be relevant to the issue. He never doubted that fire would burn; but perchance his dying eyes may see the sun sinking down into the west, as the world rolls on its axis. He dies in his belief. And knows no "better."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

SELF-CONTROL

THE subject of self-control is another simple matter which has been made difficult by slovenly thinkers.

When we say that the will is not free, and that men are made by heredity and environment, we are met with the astonishing objection that if such were the case there could be no such things as progress or morality.

When we ask why, we are told that if a man is the creature of heredity and environment it is no use his making any effort: what is to be, will be.

But a man makes efforts because he wants something; and whether he be a "free agent," or a "creature of heredity and environment," he will continue to want things, and so he will continue to make efforts to get them.

"But," say the believers in free will, "the fact that he tries to get things shows that his will is free."

Not at all. The fact is that heredity and environment compel him to want things, and compel him to try for them.

The earth does not move of its own free will; but it moves. The earth is controlled by two forces: one is centrifugal force, the other is the force of gravity. Those two forces compel it to move, and to move in a certain path, or orbit.

"But a man does not move in a regular path or orbit." Neither does the earth. For every planet draws it more or less out of its true course. And so it is with man: each influence in his environment affects him in some way.

In every case the force of heredity compels us to move, and the force of environment controls or changes our movements.

And as this is a subject of great importance, and one upon which there is much confusion of thought, I shall ask my readers to give me their best attention, so that we may make it thoroughly clear and plain.

The control of man by heredity and environment is not the end of all effort; on the contrary, it is the beginning of all effort.

We do not say that the control of the earth by gravity and centrifugal force is the end of its motion: we know that it is the *cause* of its motion.

But, we shall be told, "the earth cannot resist. It is compelled to act. Man is free."

Man is not free. Man is compelled to act. Directly a child is born it begins to act. From that instant until the end of its life, it continues to act. It *must* act. It cannot cease from action. The force of heredity compels it to act.

And the nature of its actions is decided:

1. By the nature of the individual: which is his heredity.
2. By his experiences and training: which are his environment.

Therefore to cease from all action is impossible. Therefore it is nonsense to say that if we are creatures of heredity and environment we shall cease to act.

But, it may be said, a man can cease from action: he has power to kill himself.

Well: the earth has power to destroy itself if it is caused to destroy itself. And man cannot destroy himself unless he is caused to destroy himself.

For the nature of a man—through heredity—is to love life. No man destroys himself without a cause. He may go mad, he may be in great grief, he may be disappointed, jealous, angry. But there is always a cause when a man takes his own life. And, be the cause what it may, it belongs to environment. So that a man cannot even take his own life until heredity and environment cause him to do it.

But there is a second argument, to the effect that if we believe ourselves to be creatures of heredity and environment we shall cease to make any effort to be good, or to be better than we are.

Those who use such an argument do not understand the nature and power of environment. Environment is powerful for good as well as for evil.

Well. We have seen that it is impossible for us to cease to act. Now we are told that we shall cease to act well.

But our acting well or ill depends upon the nature of our heredity and environment.

If our heredity be good, and if our environment be good, we *must* act well: we cannot help it.

If our heredity be bad, and if our environment be bad, we must act ill: we cannot help it.

What? Do you mean to say I cannot be good if I try?"

Is it not evident that you must have some good in you if you

wish to try? That good is put there by heredity and environment.

"But even a bad man sometimes tries to be good."

That is slovenly thinking. A man who is *all* bad has no desire for good. Any man who has a desire for good is not all bad.

Therefore a man who is "bad" never tries to be good, and a man who tries to be good is not "bad." When it is said that a bad man tries to be good the idea is that a very imperfect man tries to be rather better.

And he tries to be rather better because heredity or environment causes him to wish to be rather better.

Before a man can wish to be good he must know what goodness is. All men are born destitute of knowledge. To know what goodness is he must learn. All learning is environment.

But when a man knows what is good, and wishes to be good, he will try to be good. He cannot help trying. And he will try just as hard, and just as long as his temperament and training cause him to try; and he will succeed in being just as good as his temperament and training cause him to be. And his temperament is heredity, and his training is environment.

It does not follow, then, that because a man is that which heredity and environment make him, he will be nothing, for they will *make* him something. It does not follow that he will be bad, for they will make him good or bad, as they are good or bad.

"Then," exclaims the confused opponent, "the man himself counts for nothing: he is a mere machine."

No. He is not a "mere machine": he is a mere man; and he counts for just as much as his heredity and environment amount to, for his heredity and environment are *he*.

"But to tell a youth that he is a creature of heredity and environment would discourage him." Not if he understood what was meant. As we want to get this subject perfectly clear let us put a speech in two ways.

A youth tells his father that he would like to be a painter. The father's reply may be varied as follows. First, let us suppose the father says:

"You will be just as good a painter as your heredity and environment allow, or compel you to be.

"If you have any hereditary talent for the art, so much the better. But painting requires something more than talent: it requires knowledge, and practice. The more knowledge and practice you get the better you will paint. The less hereditary talent you possess, the more knowledge and practice you will need. Therefore, if you want to be a good painter, you must work hard."

The second speech would leave out the word hereditary before the word talent, and would begin, "You will be just as a good a painter as your talent and industry will make you." Otherwise the speeches would not differ.

But are we to suppose that the first speech would discourage a boy who wanted to be a painter? Not at all: if the boy understood what heredity and environment mean. It tells him that he can only be as good a painter as *his* talent and *his* industry will make him. But it does not tell him what are the limits of his industry and talent, for nobody knows what the limits are. That can only be settled by trying.

To know that he cannot get more out of a gold reef than there is in it, does not discourage a miner. What he wants is to get all there is in it, and until he wants no more, or believes there is no more, he will keep on digging.

It is so with any human effort. We all know that we cannot do more than we can, whether we believe in free will or no. But we do not know how much we can do, and nobody can tell us. The only way is to try. And we try just as hard as our nature and our desire impel us to try, and just as long as any desire or any hope remains.

Not only that, we commonly try when the limit of our attainment is in sight. For we try to get as near the limit as we can.

For instance. A young man adopts literature as his trade. He knows that before he dips a pen into a bottle that he will *never* reach the level of Shakespeare and Homer. But he tries to do as well as he can. A miner might be sure that his reef would not yield a million; but he would go on and get all he could.

So it is in the case of a desire for virtue. A man knows that he cannot be better than his nature and his knowledge allow him to be. He knows that he will never be as good as the best. But he wants to be good, and he tries to be as good as he can. The fact that a private soldier is not likely to get a commission does not prevent him from trying to get a sergeant-major's stripes. The knowledge that he is not likely to get twenty-one bull's-eyes in a match does not prevent a rifleman from getting all the bull's-eyes he can.

So with our young painter. All desire is hereditary. All knowledge is environment. The boy wants to be a painter, and he knows that industry and practice will help to make him a good painter. Therefore he tries. He tries just as hard as his desire (his heredity) and the encouragements of his master and his friends (environment) cause him to try.

We do not say that it is no use trying to be good, no use trying to be clever. On the contrary, we say that no man can be good or clever unless he does try; but that his desire to try, his power to try, and his knowledge of the value of trying are parts of his heredity and environment.

A boy says, "I cannot do this sum." His friend says, "Try again. I had to try six times; but I did it." That encouragement is environment.

A man says, "I cannot keep steady. I have tried." His friend says, "Yes, you can. Try again. Keep on trying. Try for your children's sake." That speech is environment.

We advise a weakly lad to try a course of gymnastics, and encourage him to persevere. That is environment.

In another book of mine, "God and My Neighbour," I said something that was pounced upon as inconsistent with my belief. One paper asked what I would give to "cancel that fatal admission." Many critics said in their haste that I had "given my case away."

But I am so far from regretting that paragraph that I will repeat it here, and will prove that it is not inconsistent with my belief, and that it does not "give my case away." The passage is as follows:

> I believe that I am what heredity and environment made me. But I know that I can make myself better or worse if I try. I know that because I have learnt it, and the learning has been part of my environment.

What is there in that paragraph that is inconsistent with my belief?

"I know"—how do I know anything? *All* knowledge is from environment. "I know" (through environment) that I can do something "if I try."

What causes me to try? If I try to write better, or to live better, it is evident that I wish to write better, or to live better. What makes me wish? Heredity and environment.

It may be inherited disposition to do the things called good. It may be love of approbation. Those are parts of my heredity.

It may be that I wish to do the things called good because I have been taught that I ought to do them. That teaching would be part of my environment.

Therefore the desire to be good, or better, and the knowledge

that I can be good, or better, if I try, arise from and belong to heredity and environment.

"But to try. Does not that show free will?" I have just proved that I try because I wish to succeed, and that environment has taught me that I cannot succeed without trying.

"But does not the free will come in when I decide whether to do good or bad things?" No. For that has already been decided for me by heredity and environment, which have made me wish to do good things.

So there is nothing wrong with that paragraph. The fault was in my critics, who had failed to understand the subject upon which they were trying to argue.

A man can only try if heredity or environment causes him to want to try, and he can only keep on trying as long as heredity and environment cause him to keep on.

One man is born with more talent than another. And one man is born with more industry, or with more ambition, or with more hope, patience, determination, than another.

And the man who is more ambitious, or more patient, or more hopeful, or more determined, will try harder, and will try longer than the man who is less ambitious, or hopeful, or determined.

Heredity settles that.

But the man who has less of the qualities that make one try, may be spurred on by a teacher, a friend, or a powerful motive, and so may try harder and longer than the stronger man.

As, for example, a man who has given up trying to succeed in some enterprise, may fall in love, and then the added desire to marry the woman he loves, may cause him to try harder than ever, and may lead him to succeed.

But these things belong to his environment.

Not only that, but they are a proof that environment can move a man when free will fails. For the man has a free will before he falls in love. But he loses heart, and does not succeed in his enterprise. But love, which is environment, supplies a new desire, and he does succed.

Why does he succeed? Because he wants to marry, and he cannot marry until he succeeds. This desire to marry comes of environment, and it rules the will, and compels the will to will a further effort. Is it not so?

Although we say that man is the creature of heredity and environment, we do not say that he has no self-control. We only say that his self-control comes from heredity and environment, and is limited and controlled by heredity and environment.

He can only "do as he likes" when heredity and environment cause him "to like," and he can only "do as he likes," so far and so long as heredity and environment enable him to go on.

A man "can be good if he tries," but not unless heredity and environment cause him to wish to try.

But for heredity he could not lift a finger: he would not have a finger to lift. But for environment he could not learn to use a finger. He could never know good from bad.

We all know that we can train and curb ourselves, that we can weed out bad habits, and cultivate good habits. No one has any doubt about that. The question is what causes us to do the one or the other. The answer is—heredity and environment.

We can develop our muscles, our brains, our morals; and we can develop them enormously.

But before we can do these things we must *want* to do them, and we must know that we *can* do them, and how to do them; and all knowledge, and all desire comes from environment and heredity.

A youth wishes to be strong. Why? Say he has been reading Mr. Sandow's book. He is told there that by doing certain exercises every day he can very greatly increase his strength. This sets him to work at the dumb-bells. There may be many motives impelling him. One group form a general desire to be strong: that is heredity. But the spur that moves him is Sandow's book, and that spur, and the information as to how to proceed, are environment.

The youth begins, and for a few months he does the exercises every morning. But they begin to get irksome.

He is tired, he has a slight cold, he wants to read or write. He neglects the exercises. Then he remembers that he cannot get strong unless he perseveres and does the work regularly, and he goes on again. Or he neglects his training for awhile, until he meets another youth who has improved himself. Then he goes back to the dumb-bells.

Is not this, to our own knowledge, the kind of thing that happens to us all, in all kinds of self-training, whether it be muscular, mental, or moral?

What causes the fluctuations? Let the reader examine his own conduct, and he will find a continual shifting and conflict of motives. And he will never find a motive that cannot be traced to his temperament or training, to his heredity or environment.

A man wants to learn French, or shorthand. Let him ask himself why he wants to learn, and he will find the motive springs

from temperament or training. He begins to learn. He finds the work difficult and irksome. He has to spur himself on by all kinds of expedients. Finally he learns, or he gives up trying to learn; and he will find that his action has been settled by a contest between his desire to be able to write shorthand, or to speak French, and his dislike to the drudgery of learning; or that his action has been settled by a conflict between his desire to know shorthand, or French, and his desire to do something else. He does the thing he most desires to do. And all desire comes from heredity or from environment.

Every member of his body, every faculty, every impulse is fixed for him by heredity; every kind of knowledge, every kind of encouragement or discouragement comes of environment.

I hope we have made that quite clear, and now we may ask to what it leads us.

And we shall find that it leads us to the conclusion that everything a man does is, at the instant when he does it, the only thing he *can* do: the only thing *he* can do, *then*.

"What! do you mean to say——?" Yes. It is startling. But let us keep our heads cool and our eyes wide open, and we shall find that it is quite true, and that it is not difficult to understand.

CHAPTER TWELVE
GUILTY OR NOT GUILTY?

WE are to ask whether it is true that everything a man does is the only thing he could do, at the instant of his doing it.

This is a very important question, because if the answer is yes, all praise and all blame are undeserved.

All praise and *all* blame.

Let us take some revolting action as a test.

A tramp has murdered a child on the highway, has robbed her of a few coppers, and has thrown her body into a ditch.

"Do you mean to say that tramp could not help doing that? Do you mean to say he is not to blame? Do you mean to say he is not to be punished?"

Yes. I say all those things; and if all those things are not true this book is not worth the paper it is printed on.

Prove it? I have proved it. But I have only instanced venial acts, and now we are confronted with murder. And the horror of murder drives men almost to frenzy, so that they cease to think: they can only feel.

Murder. Yes, a brutal murder. It comes upon us with a sickening shock. But I said in my first chapter that I proposed to defend those whom God and man condemn, and to demand justice for those whom God and man have wronged. I have to plead for the *bottom* dog: the lowest, the most detested, the worst.

The tramp has committed a murder. Man would loathe him, revile him, hang him: God would cast him into outer darkness.

"Not," cries the pious Christian, "if he repent."

I make a note of the repentance and pass on.

The tramp has committed a murder. It was a cowardly and cruel murder, and the motive was robbery.

But I have proved that all motives and all powers; all knowledge and capacity, all acts and all words, are caused by heredity and environment.

I have proved that a man can only be good or bad as heredity and environment cause him to be good or bad; and I have proved

these things because I have to claim that all punishments and rewards, all praise and blame, are undeserved.

And now, let us try this miserable tramp—our brother.

Guilty or Not Guilty?

The tramp has murdered a child for her money. What is his defence?

I appear for the prisoner, and claim that he is not responsible for his act.

(Cries of shame! bosh! lynch him!)

I will first of all remind the court of the reasons upon which I base my claim.

(Gentleman in white tie rises and declaims vehemently against the immorality of the defence. Talks excitedly about the flood gates of anarchy, and the bulwarks of society, and is with difficulty persuaded to resume his seat.)

Clerical environment does not make for toleration and sweet reasonableness. I proceed to open my case.

Every quality of body or mind possessed by a child at birth has been handed down to the child by its ancestors.

The child could not select its ancestors; could not select its own qualities of body and mind.

Therefore the child is not to blame for any evil quality of body or mind with which it is born.

Therefore this tramp was not to blame if, at the moment of birth, his nature was prone to violence or to vice.

The prisoner is a criminal. He is either a criminal born, or a criminal made.

If he is a "born criminal" he is a victim of atavism, and ought not to be blamed, but pitied. For it is not a fault, but a misfortune, to be born an atavist.

Had a tiger killed the child, we should have to admit that such is the tiger's nature; as it is the nature of a lark to sing.

But, if the prisoner is an atavist it is *his* nature to be furious and cruel.

We cannot, however, be sure that a man is a "born criminal" because he commits a murder. So great is the power of environment for evil, as well as for good, that perhaps the most innocent and humane man in this court might, by the influence of an evil environment, have been made capable of an act as horrible.

If the prosecution adopt the course I expect them to adopt, and claim that the unfortunate prisoner "knew better": if they suc-

ceed in proving that the prisoner was well-educated, carefully brought up, and never in all his life was once exposed to any evil influence, then I shall claim that such evidence proves the prisoner to be atavist, and entitles him to a verdict of unsound mind.

Because no man whose whole environment had been good, would be capable of murdering a child for a few coppers, unless he were an atavist or insane.

On the other hand, if it should appear, in the course of evidence, that the prisoner was born of criminal and ignorant parents, was brought up in an atmosphere of violence and crime, was sent out, untaught, or evilly taught, and undisciplined, to scramble for a living; if it should be proved that he fell into bad company, that he turned thief, that he was sent to prison and branded as a felon: if it should be proved that he has been hunted by the police, flogged with the "cat" by warders, bullied by counsel, denounced by magistrates and judges; if it should be proved that he has been treated at every turn of his wretched career as a wild beast or a pariah; if it should be proved that he has been allowed to degenerate into an ignorant, a savage, a bestial and a drunken loafer; then, I shall plead that this miserable man has been reduced to his present morose, cruel, and immoral state by evil environment; and I shall ask for a verdict in his favour.

(Cries of Monster! Hang him! Lynch him!)

It is said the prisoner is an inhuman monster. He has been made a monster by a monstrous heredity; or he has been made a monster by a monstrous environment.

No man of sound heredity ever becomes a monster save by the action of an evil environment.

Say the prisoner is an atavist; a man bred back to the beasts. Then he is entitled to be judged by the standard we apply to beasts.

Some of you will remember Poe's story of the murder in the Rue Morgue, in which a terrible murder is done by an ape. In such a case our horror and our anger would probably cause us to shoot the ape. But that would be the uprising within us of our own atavistic and brutish passions; it would not be the result of our promptings of our human reason. Reason might prompt us to kill the ape as a precaution against a repetition of violence. But anger and hate are not reasonable, not human: all anger and all hate are bestial—like the hate and the anger of the tramp.

But if the prisoner is not an atavist, or brute-man, if he has been reduced to his present moral state of environment, I shall ask for some measure of compensation from the society whose

unjust laws, and dishonest social conditions, and immoral neglect are responsible for the fact that a brother man has been allowed, or rather compelled, by society, to grow up an ignorant and desperate savage.

Be that as it may, the prisoner is a creature of heredity and environment; and, as he is bad, the heredity, or the environment, or both, must be bad. And I ask for a verdict in the prisoner's favour.

Will any man on the jury say me nay? The prisoner has defied the law, he has injured society, has outraged morality. Have law and morality not injured him? Has society not injured him?

He has committed a terrible crime, for which it is claimed that he should be punished. Who shall be punished for the crimes of the law and of society against him?

There is much proper and natural sympathy expressed by the prosecution with the parents of the murdered child. Is there no sympathy with this unhappy victim of atavism, or of society? This prisoner has been bred as a beast, or treated as a savage, until he has become a savage and a beast.

Here stands a human being, poisoned, battered, and degraded beyond all human semblance. Here stands a brother man, whose soul has been murdered by inches, has been murdered by the society that now hales him here to be denounced, and execrated, and hanged.

Do I speak truth, or falsehood? Is logic true? Are facts true? That which society has here planted it has here to reap. Not all the law, the piety, and education in the wide, wide earth can make this ruined and degraded prisoner the man he might have been. Not all the repentance we can feel, not any compensation we can offer can buy him back the soul we have destroyed. It is too late.

Gentlemen of the jury, is it nothing to you? You are accessories to the fact. I appeal to your justice, to your pity——

(A voice: How much pity had he for the child?)

None. There is no pity in his soul. Either his forefathers put none there, or society has destroyed it.

(Cries of monstrous! immoral! preposterous! shame!)

I hear cries of monstrous and immoral. But I do not hear any voice say "false." Is there a man in court can impeach my reasoning, or disprove my facts? Is there a man in court can deny one statement I have made? Is there a man in court can break one link of the steel chain of logic I have riveted upon our metaphysicians, our moralists, our kings, our judges, and our gods?

You say my defence is unreasonable and immoral. You dread the effects of justice and of reason upon society. You talk of crime and cruelty, of law and order. You want the prisoner punished. You ask for justice: but you want revenge. Give me a fair hearing, and I will speak of these things to you.

When you cry out that to deny responsibility is immoral you are thinking, at the back of your heads, that men can only be kept within the law by fear; that wrong-doing can only be repressed by punishment.

It is the old and cruel conventions of society that hold you fast to the error that blame and punishment are righteous and salutary. It is ignorance of human nature that betrays you into the belief that men can be made honest and benevolent by cruelty and terror.

Punishment has never been just, has never been effectual. Punishment has always failed of its purpose: the greater its severity, the more abject its failure.

Men cannot be made good and gentle by means of violence and wrong. The real tamers and purifiers of human hearts are love and charity and reason.

You seem to think it is a noble thing to be angry with a criminal, and to be angry with me for defending him. But it is always ignoble to be angry.

Some of you deny this blood-stained murderer for your brother; but directly your features are distorted by passion, directly your fury overcomes your reason, directly you begin to shriek for his blood, your close relationship to him appears.

Reason, patience, self-control, these are lacking in the savage criminal: I look around for them in vain amongst the crowd in this court.

I said that I would take note of what our Christian friend said about repentance. I will speak to that question now. There are few who so often forget the tenets of their own religion as the clergy. I have found it so.

The clergy are always amongst the first to raise the cry of immorality when one speaks against punishment as unjust, or useless.

Yet the clergy preach the doctrine of repentance. It is only a few weeks since the English papers printed a letter from a murderer under sentence of death, in which he spoke of meeting his relatives "at the feet of Jesus."

In a week from the date of his letter he expected to be in heaven. In a month from the time when he murdered his wife,

he expected to be with Jesus, and to live in happiness and glory for ever.

That is what the prison chaplain had taught him. It is what the clergy do teach. They talk of the folly and the immorality of abolishing prison and gallows; and then they offer the perpetrators of the most inhuman and terrible crimes a certainty of everlasting bliss in a sinless heaven.

If it is immoral and absurd to say that all criminals are sinned against as well as sinning; if it is immoral and absurd to say that we ought not to hang a man, nor to flog, nor to imprison him, what kind of morality and wisdom lie in offering all criminals an eternity of happiness and glory?

The clergy are that which their environment has made them. What kind of reasoning can we expect from men who have been taught that it is wicked to think?

Before you are angry with me for defending the prisoner be sure that you are not confounding the ideas of the criminal and the crime. I hate the crime as much as any man here; but I do not hate the criminal. I am not defending evil; I am defending the evil-doer.

Before you plume yourselves too much upon your superior morality and greater love of justice, allow me to remind you that I am asking that the world shall be moral, and not only this man: I am demanding justice for *all* men, and not for a few. But you —you think you have acted righteously and honourably when you have hanged a murderer; but you have not a thought for the inhuman social conditions that make men criminals. This prisoner is but a type: a type of the legion victims of a selfish and cowardly society. Every day, in every city, in every country, innocent children are being poisoned and perverted by millions. Which of you has spoken a word or lifted a hand to prevent this wholesale wrong? What man of you all, who are so fierce against crime, so loud in praise of morality, has ever tried in act or speech to combat the crime and the immorality which society perpetuates: with your knowledge and consent? You who are so anxious to punish crime, what are you doing to prevent it?

When I ask for a verdict in the prisoner's favour you assume that I would set him free, assuring him that he is an injured man and that fate compelled him to the act of murder.

Do you think, then, that I would release a tiger amongst the crowd in a circus, or that I would allow a homicidal maniac to go at large in the streets of a city?

It would be folly to give to this brutalised and ignorant tramp

a message which hardly a man in this court is sufficiently educated and refined to understand; it would be folly to set at liberty a besotted savage: it would be unsafe.

But I say to *you* that the prisoner is a victim of heredity and environment, that he has been debased and wronged by society, and that to punish him is unjust.

(A woman's voice: "The monster! Kill him.")

Madam, there is not a woman here can be sure that any child she bears may not be driven by society to stand some day in the dock.

But still. You are not satisfied. Some of you, at any rate, still frown and set your teeth hard. Logic or no logic, he has murdered a baby.

There stands my clerical friend, with knitted brows, and fire in his eyes. But that his calling checks his fierce old Saxon heredity this parson would echo the stern speech of Carlyle to the criminal: "Scoundrel! Know that we for ever hate thee!"

Ah! I thought so. The cloud begins to clear from the face of my clerical friend: the crowd look hopeful. Grim old Thomas appeals to you. The prisoner *is* a scoundrel, and you *do* hate him. Nothing I have said, so far, has shaken that feeling. He is a scoundrel, and you hate him. What is more, you cannot forgive me for not hating him. You cannot believe that I am a natural man. I *ought* to hate him. Well, my friends, how do we feel about a shark? I think you will find that men hate a shark. And I think you will find that they hate him more bitterly than they hate a tiger. And I think you will find that they believe they hate the shark because he is cruel. But that seems to me a mistake. The shark is not so cruel as a cat; it is not so cruel as a shrike; it is nothing like so cruel as a European lady. For though the shark will devour any animals it can reach, it does not deliberately torture them. Now the cat tortures the mouse, the shrike impales flies or beetles upon a thorn, and leaves them to die, and the European lady eats lobster, which has, to her knowledge, been boiled alive.

But the shark kills human beings. So do tigers, so do lions, and so do men.

But the shark is horrible. Yes; now we are getting nearer the real root of our hatred. The shark is horrible. And so is the murderer.

But there is a difference between horror and hate. The murderer is horrible to me, far more horrible than the shark, just as

a mad man is more horrible than a mad dog; just as a human corpse is more awful than the carcase of a deer.

The criminal makes me shudder, he makes my flesh creep; my whole nature recoils from him. But I do not hate him, and I do not blame him.

Which of us does not admire and honour an innocent, graceful, and charming girl? To all of us, men and women, her presence is more delightful than a garden of sweet flowers.

Think of some such amiable and gentle creature. Then imagine that we meet her ten years hence, and find her a drunken harlot, wallowing in the gutter. Think of her then so hideous, filthy, and obscene; think of her debased, indecent, treacherous; think of her incapable of honesty, of gratitude, of truth; think of her sullied and broken and so vile that she would betray her only friend for a glass of gin: think of her well, and ask yourselves how should we feel towards her.

Some of us would blame her: some of us would pity her: some of us would try to befriend her: but hardly one of us could endure her touch, her speech, her gaze. She has become a horror in the light of the day.

My clerical friend and I would stand before her sick and sorry and ashamed. We should be alike dismayed and shocked: we should be alike touched and repelled. But there in that tragic moment would appear the likeness and the difference between us. He would not *understand.*

The unfortunate woman has been rendered physically and morally loathsome to us. So has this murderer. But that should cause us to pity, and not to hate them; it should inspire us not to destroy them; but to destroy the evil conditions that have brought them, and millions as unfortunate as they, to this terrible and shameful pass. The bitterest wrong of all is the fact that these fellow-creatures of ours have been degraded below the reach of our help and our affection.

Looking into my own heart, and recalling my experience of men and women, I must own that there is not one in a thousand of us who might not have become a shame and a horror to our fellows had our environment been as cruel and as hard as the environment of these from whom we shrink appalled.

And when I read of a murder, when I see some human wreck, so repulsive and unsightly that my soul is sick within me, and my flesh shudders away from the contact, I crush the anger out of my heart, and remember what I am and might have been, and that this man, this woman, now so dreadful or so vile, is a

victim of a state of society which most of us believe in and uphold.

I cannot hate these miserables, but I cannot love them. I could not sleep in a dirty bed, nor eat a rotten peach, nor listen to a piano out of tune, nor drink after a leper or a slut, nor make a friend of a sweater, nor shake the hand of an assassin, nor sit at table with a filthy sot.

But to drive our fellow-creatures into disgrace and crime beyond redemption, and then to hate them or to hang them; is that just?

To loathe and punish the victims of society, and never lift a hand against the wrongs that are their ruin, is that reasonable?

I ask for a verdict in the prisoner's favour; but I cannot ask that he be set at liberty. We could not liberate a smallpox patient nor a lunatic.

Although the prisoner ought not to be punished, it is imperative that he be restrained.

Being what he is: being what society has made him, he is not fit to be at large.

We must defend ourselves against him. We must protect our children from him, even although we have failed to protect other children against society.

I ask the jury for a verdict in the prisoner's favour. I leave the prisoner to their justice and to their reason. That is my case.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN
THE FAILURE OF PUNISHMENT

DOES it do a man any good to hang him? Does it do us any good to hang him? Is any human being in the wide world edified or bettered when a man is hanged? Is it any *use* hanging men?

That it is unjust to hang a man we have seen. But is it any use?

There is a certain school of moralists who are angered and alarmed by the mere suggestion that men should cease to blame and punish each other. They protest that virtue would die out and morality become a mockery if we ceased to scold, and whip, and execute each other. They seem to believe that injustice and ferocity are the best exemplars of justice and human kindness.

Dr. Aked, minister of Pembroke Chapel, Liverpool, declaiming against what he called "this preposterous notion of moral irresponsibility," declared that "it is the doctrine of every coward, of every cur, of every thief who ever pilfered from his master's till, of every seducer and traitor the world has seen." I whisper the name of Torquemada, and pass on.

Dr. Aked, supposing, for the sake of illustration, that he who has been a bad man, said:

> If, in the mercy of God, the day comes when I see myself as I am, when there is no more shuffling, when to myself Myself is compelled, even to the teeth and forehead of my faults, to give in evidence—if such a day comes, no juggling with words, *no nonsense about not knowing any better* or being driven by education upon organisation, by environment acting on heredity, will serve to conceal from my soul the hideous view of its own guilt.

And yet Dr. Aked is a minister of the Christian religion, and a professed follower of Christ, who said of his murderers, *"Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."*

I might imitate Dr. Aked, and denounce the idea that punish-

ment makes men virtuous and docile as the idea of every tyrant, of every religious persecutor, of every wife-beater, of every martinet, of every bully and brute the world has ever seen. But I prefer to look calmly and sensibly at the evidence.

That mighty moral ruler, King Henry VIII., during his reign did, according to the author of *Elizabethan England,* hang up seventy-two thousand thieves, rogues, and vagabonds.

Now, Sir Thomas More, who was one of the finest men England ever bred, and was Lord High Chancellor under Henry VIII., has put it upon record, in his great and noble work, *Utopia,* that these severe punishments were not only unjust, but ineffectual.

I will quote from Sir Thomas:

> One day when I was dining with him (Cardinal Archbishop Morton) there happened to be at table one of the English lawyers, who took occasion to run out in a high commendation of the severe execution of justice upon thieves, who, as he said, were then hanged so fast, that there were sometimes twenty on one gibbet; and upon that he said he could not wonder enough how it came to pass, that since so few escaped, there were yet so many thieves left who were still robbing in all places.
>
> Upon this, I, who took the boldness to speak freely before the Cardinal, said there was no reason to wonder at the matter, since this way of punishing thieves was neither just in itself, nor good for the public; for as the severity was too great, so the remedy was not effectual; simple theft not being so great a crime that it ought to cost a man his life; and no punishment, how severe soever, being able to restrain those from robbing, who can find out no other way of livelihood; and in this, said I, not only you in England, but a great part of the world, imitate some ill masters that are readier to chastise their scholars than to teach them. There are dreadful punishments enacte against thieves, but it were much better to make such good provisions by which every man might be put in a method how to live, and so be preserved from the fatal necessity of stealing, and dying for it. . . . If you do not find a remedy to these evils, it is a vain thing to boast of your severity of punishing theft; which, though it may have the appearance of justice, yet in itself is neither just nor convenient; for if you suffer your people to be ill-educated, and their manners to be corrupted from their infancy, and then punish them for those

crimes to which their first education disposed them, what else is to be concluded from this, but that you first make thieves, and then punish them?

In confirmation of the statement of Henry the Eighth's Lord Chancellor, we have the evidence of Harrison, that after these 72,000 executions of Henry, there were more thieves than ever in the next reign.

Harrison, who wrote in the reign of Elizabeth, says of the "rogues and vagabonds": "the punishment that is ordained for this kind of people is very sharp, and yet it cannot restrain them from their gadding."

In that day any one convicted, "on the testimony of two honest and credible witnesses," of being a "rogue," "he is then immediately adjudged to be grievously whipped, and burned through the gristle of the right ear, with a hot iron of the compass of an inch about." Amongst the "rogues" were included actors, jugglers, fencers, minstrels, and *tinkers!*

Harrison boasts that our laws against felons were more humane than those of the Continent. Let us consider the leniency of Elizabeth's day. A woman who poisoned her husband was burnt alive. Other poisoners were boiled alive, or scalded to death in "seething water or lead." Heretics and witches were burnt alive. Murderers were hanged alive in chains. Harrison adds: "We have use neither of the wheel nor of the bar as in other countries; but when wilful manslaughter is perpetrated, besides hanging, the offender hath his right hand commonly stricken off, before or near the place where the act was done, after which he is led forth to the place of execution and there put to death according to the law."

For treason men were "hanged, drawn, and quartered."

For felony, which was anything from highway robbery to theft of a piece of bread, men, women, and children were hanged. There were over 250 offences for which the penalty was death.

For "speaking sedition against a magistrate" the offender had both his ears cut off.

If a prisoner refused to plead he was pressed to death under heavy weights.

Harrison says that "there is not one year" in which three or four hundred "rogues" are not "eaten up by the gallows." And then he goes on to remark that so many are the idle rogues, that "except some better order be taken, or the laws already made

be better executed, such as dwell in uplandish towns and little villages shall live but in small safety or rest."

A hundred years ago there were over two hundred offences for which the punishment was death. Boys and girls were hanged for theft. Mr. Collinson, in *Facts about Floggings*, says that in 1816 there were at one time over fifty prisoners in England waiting to be hanged, and that one of them was a child of tender years. Mr. Collinson says:

> The inefficiency and brutality of all this torture and bloodshed became obvious to the people, through the propaganda of a few daring and enlightened reformers, and it was swept away.

But let us come nearer home. About a dozen years ago the late Mr. Hopwood, K.C., Recorder of Liverpool, was good enough to give me his opinions on the subject of harsh and lenient punishment. Mr. Hopwood said:

> I was first convinced of the uselessness of harsh sentences by attendance at two courts of sessions about thirty-five years ago. The two courts were those of Manchester and Salford—towns very similar as to population and conditions of life. In Salford the sentences were uniformly lenient. In Manchester they were uniformly severe. People said Manchester would be purged of crime; that all the criminals would flock to Salford. It was not so. The state of things continued for some years, and caused no increase of crime in the one, nor decrease of crime in the other town. Hence it becomes evident that a great deal of useless punishment was inflicted in Manchester. I was a young barrister at the time, and I took the lesson to heart.

Mr. Hopwood only claimed a negative result. He said: "I do not say I have reduced crime, but only that I have reduced punishment without increasing crime. For instance, I claim that during my six years at this court I have saved three thousand years of imprisonment."

When I remarked "that saved a great waste of money," he answered that it was "a great saving of humanity." He claimed that life and property were at least as secure under a clement judge as under a cruel one, and that his system saved much suffering and shame, not only to the prisoners, but also to those dependent upon them. He said that very often his treatment had a

good effect upon the prisoners: "Do you know, often they are ashamed to come back."

Mr. Hopwood told me that at first he met with strong opposition, but that his example had such an effect that the local magistrates had come "to give six or ten months' imprisonment in cases where formerly the offenders would have got seven years."

Asked whether his leniency had caused criminals to flock to Liverpool, Mr. Hopwood answered, "Not at all"; and his denial was backed by the statement of the Chief Constable that "crime was decreasing to an appreciable extent."

Mr. Hopwood told me he would like to release one-third of those men then in prison, and, he added, "another third ought never to have gone there." Asked what that meant, he said that one-third of the prisoners were innocent. My own observation, in the police-courts afterwards, convinced me that he was quite right. Finally, after showing me that the boasted cure of garrotting by "the cat" was a fiction, "there never was a garrotter flogged," Mr. Hopwood asked me to go and see some of our prisons, remarking, gravely:

> The prison system is cruel and vile. The prisoners are starved, tortured, and degraded. The system should be altered at once. It is inhumanly severe upon the guilty, and, in my opinion, a good third of those in our gaols are *not* guilty.

Dr. James Devon, medical officer at Glasgow Prison, told the Royal Philosophical Society in that city, in 1904, that "with milder methods of repression we have not more, but less, crime: and certainly much less brutality."

Dr. Hamilton D. Wey, of Elmira Reformatory, Elmira, N. Y., says:

"The time will come when every punitive institution in the world will be destroyed, and be replaced by hospitals, schools, workshops, and reformatories."

Dr. Lydston, professor of criminal anthropology, writes as follows:

> "Try to reform your man, try to purify and elevate his soul, and if he does not come to time, lock him up or hang him." This has been the war-cry of the average reformer through all the ages. "Make a healthy man of your criminal, or prospective criminal, give him a sound, well-developed brain to think with, and rich, clean blood to feed it upon, and an opportunity

to earn an honest living—then preach to him if you like." This is the fundamental principle of the scientific criminologist. Which is the more rational?

Havelock Ellis says in his work on "the criminal," "Flogging is objectionable, because it is ineffectual, and because it brutalises and degrades those on whom it is inflicted, those who inflict it, and those who come within the radius of its influence."

The Recorder of Liverpool told me that millions were wasted upon prisons which ought to be spent upon detection. "Make detection swift and certain," said he, "and crime will cease. No one will steal if he is sure he will be caught every time."

This is proved by the Revenue service. Penalties did not stop smuggling; but it has now become almost impossible to run a cargo: the coast is so closely guarded.

Dr. Lydston, in *The Diseases of Society*, says:

> The prospective criminal once born, what does society do to prevent his becoming a criminal? Practically nothing. . . . What is the remedy at present in vogue? Society punishes the vicious child after a criminal act has been committed, and sends the diseased one to the hospital to be supported by the public, after he has become helpless. Even in this, the twentieth century, the child who has committed his first offence is in most communities thrown by the authorities into contact with older and more hardened criminals—to have his criminal education completed. The same fate is meted out to the adult "first offender." We have millions for sectarian universities, millions for foreign missions, but few dollars for the redemption of children of vicious propensities or corrupting opportunities, who are the product of our own vicious social system. Every penal institution, every expensive process of criminal law, is a monument to the stupidity and wastefulness of society—and expenditure of money and energy to cure a disease that might be largely prevented, and more logically treated where not prevented.

Lombroso, the great Italian criminologist, said, in 1901:

> There are few who understand that there is anything else for us to do, to protect ourselves from crime, except to inflict punishments that are often only new crimes, and that are almost always the source of new crimes.

To what does all this evidence tend?

From the day of Sir Thomas More to the present hour, it has been claimed by wise and experienced men that punishment is not only unjust, but worse than useless. And the statistics of crime have always supported the claim.

There was more crime in the fifteenth century, when penalties were so severe, than there is to-day. There were worse crimes. There was more brutality.

The abolition of cruel punishments has diminished crime. The abolition of flogging in the army and navy has not injured either service. The improvement in school discipline has not lowered the moral standard of boys and girls.

But, it may be urged, the decrease in crime, and the improvement in morals are not due only to the increased leniency of punishments. They are due also to the spread of education, and to the improved conditions of life.

Exactly. That is my case. Decrease of punishment, and increase of education, have diminished crime and improved morals.

Punish less, and teach more; blame less, and encourage more; hate less, and love more; and you will get not a lowering, but a raising of the moral standard; not an increase in crime, but a decrease. And the improvement will be due to alteration for the better of—environment.

Chance has placed me very often in positions of authority. I have been in charge of rough and reckless men: soldiers, militiamen, navvies, workers of all sorts. I have never found it necessary to be harsh, nor to threaten, nor to drive. I have always found that to respect men as men, to treat them fairly and quietly, and to show a little kindness now and again, has sufficed to get the best out of them.

I have gone into the midst of a crowd of Irish soldiers, all drunk, and all fighting in true Donnybrook fashion, and have got order without a hard word, without making a single prisoner. Directly they recognised me they calmed down. Had I been a sergeant disliked by them they would have thrown me downstairs.

I have found the wildest and the lowest amenable to reason and to kindness. One of the greatest ruffians in the regiment once spoke rudely to me in camp, and even threatened me. I was then a lance-corporal, and a mere boy. I sat down and talked to the bruiser quietly for a few minutes, and from that day he would have done anything for me.

There was a blackguard in my company who once threatened to murder me. A few months later he was taken ill in the night

and I attended to him, and probably saved his life. He never forgot it. It was but a small kindness, and he was what is generally called a scoundrel, but he showed his gratitude to me all the rest of the time I was in the army.

As a child I was brought up under strict discipline. I felt that it was a wrong method. I have "spoilt" my children; and they are better than I ever was.

Parents beat their children for their own errors. If a father cannot gain the respect and obedience of his children, it is because he is foolish, or violent, or ignorant. Children, soldiers, and animals are alike in one respect: they know and respect strength and reason. The quiet manager, officer, sergeant, parent, who knows his own mind, who keeps his temper, who is not afraid, can always get discipline and order. If I thought any one under my control or care was afraid of me, I should feel ashamed. If a master rules only by fear of punishment he is not fit to rule at all. When those over whom we happen to be placed in authority feel that we deserve their respect, we get it. If you want to know whether a man is fit for command, put him with men who are not bound to obey him. Put him with his equals, where he has no power to punish nor to harm. Thus you will find the real leader of men: the man who leads with his brains.

I knew a young lieutenant once, a boy of twenty. He met a boy private in town, and saw that he had been drinking. Had he made a prisoner of the boy, the private would have got punished for drunkenness, and would have got drunk again. But the young officer sent for the boy the next day and said, "If I were you, Thomas, I wouldn't drink. It is a poor game, and your people would not like it." That boy was cured.

That same officer, if the men were unsteady on parade, would stand quite still and *look* at them. He had clear blue eyes, and his look was not stern, it was calm and confident. It brought the whole company to attention without a word. The officer was a *man,* and the men knew it, and they knew it because *he* knew it. The boss who begins to bully is not sure of himself. Children, soldiers, workers, and animals know by instinct when the boss is not sure of himself.

Those who put so much trust in blame and punishment do not understand human nature. I said in a previous chapter that a man could not believe a thing unless his reason told him that it was true. I now say that a man cannot help believing a thing when his reason tells him it is true. The secret of reform is to make men understand.

The terrors of capital punishment, the terrors of the "cat," even the terrors of hell-fire fail to awe the criminal. That is because the criminal is stupid or ignorant, and lacks imagination. He hears of hell, and of death. But he cannot imagine either. He seldom thinks. He seldom looks beyond the end of his nose.

Discipline is not preserved in the army by the dread of the "cat," nor of the cells. It is kept by the fact that the wildest and most reckless man knows that he *must* obey, that the whole physical and moral force of the army is united to insist upon obedience.

If he disobey an order he will be punished. He does not care a snap of his fingers for the punishment. But he knows that after he has done his punishment drill the order will be repeated, and that he will be obliged to obey. He knows that the sentiment of the army is against him until he does obey.

I have seen an officer get a battalion into a mess on parade, and then lose his temper and bully the men.. And I have seen another officer on the same day drill the men and get them to work like a machine. The first officer did not know how to give the orders. The second knew his business, was sure that he did know it, and so let the men feel that he knew it.

It is with parents as with those two officers. The one who knows his duty, and does it properly, never has any occasion to lose his temper.

It is time Solomon's rod followed the witches' broom. It is time the "cat," and the chain, and the cell, and the convict's dress, and the oakum and the skilly, and the gallows followed the rack and the thumbscrew and the faggot and the wheel. It is time the leaders of the people were taught to lead. It is time the educated and the uneducated were given some real education. It is time that tyranny, cruelty, self-righteousness, superstition, and the bad old conventions of an ignorant past, gave place to reason, to science, to manhood.

"But," the penal moralist will demand, "if you propose to abolish blame and punishment, what do you propose to put in their place?"

And I answer, "Justice, knowledge, and reason—in fact, an improved environment."

The cause of most of our social and moral troubles is ignorance.

By ignorance I do not mean illiteracy only: there are many classical scholars who are really ignorant men. No: I mean ignorance of human nature and of the essentials to a happy and wholesome human life. It is this kind of ignorance which divides the

people into two classes: rich and poor—masters and slaves. It is this kind of ignorance which causes men to sacrifice health, happiness, and virtue for the sake of vanity, and idleness, and wealth. It is the kind of ignorance which keeps twelve millions of people in a rich and fertile country always on the verge of destitution. It is this kind of ignorance which saddles mankind with the cost of armies, and fleets, and prisons, and police. It is this kind of ignorance which breeds millions of criminals, and educates them in crime. It is this kind of ignorance which splits a great nation into castes, and sects, and makes the realisation of the glorious ideal of human brotherhood impossible. It is this kind of ignorance which drives professing Christians to neglect the teachings of Christ. It is this kind of ignorance which makes possible the millionaire, the aristocrat, the sweater, the tramp, the thief, the degenerate, and the slave. It is this kind of ignorance which keeps the children hungry, drives the men to drunkenness, and the women to shame. It is this kind of ignorance which is answerable for all evil environments from which hate, and greed, and poverty, and immorality spring, like weeds from a rank and neglected soil.

We cannot get rid of this most deadly form of ignorance by means of blame and punishment. There is only one way to drive out ignorance, and that is by spreading knowledge.

What knowledge? Knowledge of human nature and of the essentials to a happy and wholesome life.

It is bad for men to be rich and idle; it is bad for men to be ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-housed, ill-taught, unhonoured, and unloved.

Whilst life is a sordid scramble, in which the prizes are pernicious wealth, and luxury, and idleness, and in which the blanks are hunger, ignorance, vice, unhappiness, the prison, and the gallows; immorality and crime must flourish as pestilence flourishes in a filthy, pent, and insanitary city. It is sad to see the custodians of the public morality bewailing the wickedness of men, and fostering the evil surroundings from which evil springs. It is as foolish as to bewail the presence of malarial fever, to punish the victims for spreading the disease, and at the same time to refuse to drain the marsh from which the malaria comes, because it is the property of a grand duke, who wishes to shoot wildfowl there.

What do I propose should be done. Why that, my friends, is another story. What I propose at present to do is to prove that crime and immorality are *caused*: to show what the causes are; and to point out that the recognised remedies are ineffectual.

While we have an idle rich, and a hungry and ignorant poor,

we cannot get rid of vice and crime. To punish the criminals we have made, is unjust and useless; to pray for deliverance from plague: we must look to the drains—we must improve the environment.

No man should be idle. No man should be rich. No man should be ignorant, no man destitute. Every man should have a chance to earn the essentials to a wholesome, happy, temperate, and useful life. Every child should be nourished, and taught, and trained.

Crime, vice, disease, poverty, idleness: all these are preventable evils.

But we cannot drain our marshes, because, little as we heed the misery of the people, the ignorance and hunger of the children, the despair of the men and the degradation of the women, we are marvellously tender of Grand Ducal sport.

It is Mammon we worship, not God; it is property we prize, not life; it is vanity we love, and not our fellow-creatures. We are an ignorant, atavistic people; and our priests are wondrous moral.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN
SOME OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

THE upholders of the doctrine of free will commonly fall into the error of considering heredity and environment apart from each other.

Father Adderley, in a lecture given at Saltley, told his hearers that "all our great scientists agree that people have the power to overcome their hereditary tendencies." Perhaps: but they can only get that power from environment; and if the environment is bad they will not get that power.

But the most surprising example of this mental squinting is afforded by the Rev. C. A. Hall, who may be said to squint with both eyes. For, in a lecture given at Paisley, this gentleman first shows that we can overcome our heredity, and then shows that we can overcome our environment. And yet it never occurred to him that to prove the freedom of the will we must be able to overcome our heredity and environment together.

Mr. Hall's argument may be stated thus: By the aid of environment we can overcome our heredity; by the aid of heredity, or of good environment we can overcome bad environment: therefore we are superior to heredity and environment.

It is like saying: by means of natural intelligence and a good teacher I can become a good scholar; by means of natural intelligence and a good teacher I can correct the errors of a bad teacher. Therefore I do not depend upon intelligence nor teaching for my knowledge.

But I have answered Messrs. Adderley and Hall in my chapter on self-control.

An example of a similar error is afforded by a clergyman who wrote to me from Warrington. He said:

> You can never hope to improve the social environment until you *persuade* men that they can rise superior to their circumstances.

The men are to be "persuaded" to rise. And what is that per-

suasion, but a part of their environment? And if men are "persuaded" to try, and succeed, to whom is the victory due? Is it not due to the "persuasion"? Of course it is. And the persuasion came from outside themselves, and is part of their environment.

The same clergyman said, "If heredity and environment have made the individuals of whom society is made up, heredity and environment have made society itself," and asked me how I could logically accuse society of injuring any one.

A strange question based upon a misunderstanding. The criminal injures society, society injures the criminal.

I accuse both of injurious action. I *blame* neither. I say both are that which heredity and environment made them. I say neither can help it. But I say that both can be *taught* to help it, and that *both* should be taught to help it. Is there anything illogical in that?

This brings me to the Rev. Charles Marson, a very clever and witty man, who is hopelessly muddled over the simple matter. In "The Religious Doubts of Democracy," Mr. Marson says:

> Now, as reform starts by a feeling and conviction of blame, and cannot start at all unless it can say: "This is wrong. It might be right. This ought not to be and is, and need not be"; so, if the answer is: "But this was as mathematically fixed at its birth as the path of a planet in its orbit," the poor reformer can only say, "Sorry I spoke"; and if he speaks again it will be to laugh at the CLARION for wasting ink in blaming orbits which are mathematically fixed.
>
> Indeed, if I were a burglar, I would invest part of my swag in endowing Determinists to pour arguments and ridicule upon Christian magistrates and criminal codes, with their active and irritating blame. Certainly, if I were Lord Rackrent, I should invite my anti-reform friends, the Determinists, to dinner, take them to the opera, and send them round to address the Socialists, at my expense.
>
> Mr. Blatchford, being anxious to fight against the doctrine of sin, builds a fatalist rampart, looks over the top, and says: "Can man sin against God? His actions are fixed." We walk round behind him and say: "Can man sin against man? Can social systems sin against man?" And the very rampart of fatalism he has erected hinders him from escaping from a withering fire, except by backing into obscurantism and ultra-Toryism.

This is the same error, differently stated. If man cannot be blamed, society cannot be blamed: therefore everything must remain as it is. I often wonder where the clergy learn their logic.

Men cannot be blamed: society cannot be blamed. But both can be *altered*: by environment. That is to say, if heredity and environment have endowed some man with reason and knowledge and inclination for the task, that man may be able to improve society, or the individual, by *teaching* one or both. And the teaching will be environment.

We cannot, as Mr. Marson pointed out in his article, "blame" environment; but we can attribute evils to the action of environment, and we can change the environment, always provided that heredity and environment have endowed us with the needful knowledge and brains for the purpose.

Let us look at the facts. There is a very terrible disease called diphtheria. It is caused by a small fungoid bacillus, and it has killed myriads of children, and caused much suffering and grief.

Do we blame "the vegetable bacillus"? No. We cannot blame a bacillus.

So I say we cannot blame diphtheria for killing children. No sane person ever suggested blame in such a case. But do we take any the less trouble to fight against diphtheria?

We do not "blame" a rat for eating our chickens, nor a boat for capsizing in a breeze, nor a lunatic for setting fire to a house, nor a shark for eating a sailor. But has any sane person ever suggested that we should not try to keep rats out of the henhouse, nor to ballast a faulty boat, nor restrain a madman from playing with fire, nor to rescue a sailor from a shark?

Mr. Marson asks ironically whether a social system "can be naughty," whether a social system may be praised logically, blamed logically, and held responsible logically.

I reply that a social system cannot be logically "blamed," any more than a shark, a disease, a fool can be logically blamed. But a social system may be approved or disapproved, and may be altered and abolished.

We cannot "blame" a man's environment, in the strict meaning of the word. But we may attribute a man's crime, or shame, or ruin to his environment.

We do not blame prussic acid for being lethal; but we do not allow chemists to sell it in large quantities to every casual stranger. *Why?* Because it is *poison.*

Well, the influenza bacillus is poison, falsehood is poison, vice is poison, greed and vanity and cruelty are poison; and it behooves

us to destroy those poisons, and so to improve our social system and the environment of our fellow-men.

We come now to the idea that to teach men that all blame is unjust is to encourage them to do wrong. This idea is expressed, with characteristic clumsiness and obscurity, by Bishop Butler, in that monument of loose thinking and foggy writing, "The Analogy of Religion."

What Butler wanted to say, and tried to say, in more than 800 words of his irritating style, is simply that a child brought up to believe that praise and blame were unjust, would be a plague to all about him, and would probably come to the gallows. The reader will find it in Chapter VI. of "The Analogy."

Now, I quite believe that if the matter had to be explained to a child by Bishop Butler the effect would be fatal, because the poor bishop did not understand it himself, and was not good at explaining things he did understand. But the child would be in no danger if he were instructed by a man who knew what he was talking about, and was able to say what he knew in plain words and clear sentences. And I can say from my experience of children that I find them readier of apprehension, and clearer thinkers than I have found most clergymen.

As I have dealt with this argument in my chapter on self-control I need not go over the ground again. But I may say that we should teach a child that some things are right and some are wrong, and why they are right and why they are wrong; and that he was not to blame others because they either do not know any better, or are unable to do any better, and we should teach him that one learns to be good as one learns to write or to swim, and that the harder one tries the better one succeeds. And we should feel quite sure that the child would be just as good as his heredity and our training made him; and as for his coming to the gallows, if *all* children were taught on our system *there would be no gallows to come to,* and very few looking for that sacred instrument, the sight of which convinced Gulliver that he was "once more in a Christian country."

Is it necessary for me to answer the charge of presumption brought against me by Dr. Aked? Dr. Aked says I am presumptuous because I deny the belief of great and holy men of past ages. He says that the agreement of Cheyne and Perowne in praise of the fifty-first Psalm is typical of the world's consensus of opinion. And this Psalm is the cry of a broken heart for deliverance from sin. Dr. Aked goes on as follows:

To-day we are asked to believe that all this is a delusion.

We are told that man could not and cannot sin against God. We are invited to believe that the men of every age and nation whose hearts have bled in sorrow over accomplished sin, who have cried in anguish of soul for deliverance from the body of this death, whose joy in the realisation of divine forgiveness has flowed in strains of immortal joy over countless generations, were ignorant and foolish persons, inventing their sufferings and imagining their solace, and needing some journalist of the twentieth century to teach them that no man could really sin against God! We are, apparently, expected to believe that the author of this Psalm and the author of the "second Isaiah," that Paul and Augustine, the author of "Thomas A'Kempis," and John Bunyan, knew nothing of psychology and nothing of divinity, that they never understood their own experience, and, though they have interpreted humanity to uncounted millions of the children of men, yet lived and died in crass ignorance of the workings of the human heart.

The proposition is not modest. That any man should be found, however flippantly, to advance it is marvellous. That any human being should be found to accept it seriously is incredible.

Dr. Aked's argument amounts to a claim that we should believe in Free Will because most men believe in it, because many good and great men have believed in it.

But many millions of men have believed in a material hell. In which Dr. Aked does not believe. Many good and great men have believed in a material hell, and millions of men (some of them good and clever) still believe in a material hell. And Dr. Aked does not believe in it.

And when the doctrine of hell-fire was first assailed, what did the Dr. Akeds of the time declare? That without the fear of hell men would be wicked, and would do wrong in defiance of God; and that the theory that there was no hell of fire was "incredible."

And what is this charge of audacity which Dr. Aked brings against me for denying sin? It is just the charge that was brought against Charles Darwin when he had the immodesty to declare that the human species was evolved from lower forms.

How was that theory met by the Dr. Akeds of the time? Darwin was ridiculed and denounced, and nearly all the religious world was aghast at his folly and his irreverence, and his presumption in advancing a theory which was contrary to the teachings of Holy Writ. But Darwin's theory was *true*.

Darwin's theory was true, and I claim that this theory is true. Is it any answer to tell me that I am presumptuous in opposing the beliefs of great men past and present? Darwin opposed the general belief, and Darwin was right and the general belief was wrong. Is it any more reasonable to condemn this theory for traversing the fifty-first Psalm than it was to condemn Evolution for traversing the Book of Genesis?

Are we never to deviate from the beliefs of our forefathers, be the evidence against those beliefs never so strong? How, then, shall knowledge increase or progress be possible?

Presumptuous to deny what great men in the past believed? Then the world is flat, and the sun goes round the world, and polygamy is right, and Saturday is the Sabbath day, and all Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists, Confucians, and pagans will be damned, and the abolition of witch-burning was a mistake, and Luther was presumptuous for resisting the authority of the Church of Rome, and Dr. Aked is presumptuous for differing from the Church of England. In such absurdities does the clerical mind entangle itself when it tries to think.

Mr. Marson says that if he were a burglar he would spend some of the money he stole in paying lecturers to teach the doctrine that men ought not to be blamed for their actions. But if all men were trained upon our principles there *would not be any burglars.*

However, let us see what Mr. Marson means. He means that if punishment and blame were abolished burglars and other wrongdoers might go scot free, and might rob, or kill, or cheat; and no one should say them nay. But Mr. Marson is a clergyman, and does not understand.

It is a strange notion this, that if you do not blame a man you cannot interfere with him. We do not blame a lunatic: even a Christian does not blame a lunatic. But we do not allow a madman to go round with an axe and murder people. We do not hang a madman, nor punish him in any way. If a murderer is proved to be mad he is pardoned and—restrained.

So, although we might not blame a thief, or a sweater, or a poisoner, it does not follow that we should allow him to go on stealing, or sweating, or murdering.

We propose to defend society from the individual; but we propose to do more than that: we propose to do what the Christian does not attempt to do—we propose to defend the individual from society.

The Christian method of dealing with the burglar is to neglect

him in his childhood and his youth, to allow him to become a burglar, from sheer lack of opportunity to become anything else, and then to lecture him and send him to prison.

But, my Christian friends, how do you find your system work? If you tell Bill Sykes he is a bad man, that the angels will not love him, that the fat successful sweater or idler will loathe and despise him, and if you send Bill to prison and hard labour for a term of years, will it always happen that William will repent and reform, and become a building society or a joint-stock bank himself?

Or do you find that poor Bill hardens his heart, and hates you; and that he comes out of your shameful prison, and from your cowardly and savage whips and chains, and burgles and drinks again, and learns to carry a revolver?

If we want to get rid of evil we must remove the *cause* of evil. It is useless to punish the victim.

It is with moral evils as with physical evils. When an epidemic of fever or smallpox comes upon us we do not punish the sick, nor blame them. But we isolate the sick, and we attack the *cause* of the sickness, by attending to matters of hygiene and sanitation. That is how we ought to deal with moral sickness.

Men do not live badly because they are "wicked," but because they are ignorant. The remedy lies in the study and adoption of the laws of the science of human life.

If we are to have a moral people we must first of all have a healthy people. If the working classes are to be made sober and pure and wise, the other classes must be made honest, and to be made honest they must be taught what honesty is.

But the Christian cannot teach what honesty is because he does not know. He cannot attack the causes of vice and crime, because he does not understand that vice and crime are caused. He has been taught that men do wrong because they will not do right, and that they can do right if they will.

The Christian blames the criminal, and punishes him, because the Christian believes that the criminal has a "free will."

But we should not blame nor punish the criminal, because we know that he is a victim of heredity and environment. So we should restrain the criminal, and try to reform him; and we should attack the environment which made him a criminal, and is still making more criminals, and we should try to alter that environment, and so prevent the making of more criminals.

For the hardened criminal, restraint may be neccesary. It may be impossible to reform him. It may be too late.

But it is not too late to save millions of innocent children from a like disaster and disgrace. It is not too late to prevent evil in the future, though we cannot atone for the evil wrought in the past.

We know, and the Christian knows, that where a murderer destroys one life society destroys thousands. We know that all through our pursy civilisation, in all the fine cities of our wealth, our culture, and our boastful piety, the ruin of children, the production of monsters, the desecration of human souls, is going steadily and ruthlessly on. We know this, and the Christian knows this; but we propose to prevent it, to stop it, by striking at the root *cause:* the Christian hopes to check it by lopping off here and there one of the fruits.

That is one reason why I claim that Humanism is a better religion than Christianity; that is one reason why I claim that Christianity is a failure.

What is the cause of crime? The Christian does not know. What is the cause of ignorance? The Christian does not know. What is the cause of poverty? The Christian does not know.

For ages the Christians trusted to religion to rid them of pestilence. Science taught them to *prevent* pestilence. Now they trust to religion to rid the world of vice and crime. It is the same old error. Science has shown us the causes of vice and crime: science teaches us that we must attack the causes.

But the world is very ignorant in affairs of moral sanitation; and has an almost religious veneration for the sacredness of Grand Ducal ducks.

As for the children—why do not their parents take care of them? Perhaps because the parents were neglected by ***their*** parents.

And which is the better, to go back for a dozen generations blaming parents, or to begin now and teach and save the children?

CHAPTER FIFTEEN
THE DEFENCE OF THE BOTTOM DOG

FRIENDS, I write to defend the Bottom Dog. It is a task to stagger the stoutest heart. With nearly all the power, learning, and wealth of the world against him; with all the precedents of human history against him; with law, religion, custom, and public sentiment against him, the unfortunate victim's only hope is in the justice of his case. I would he had a better advocate, as I trust he some day will.

The prosecution claim a monopoly of learning, and virtue, and modesty. They may be justified in this. I do not grudge them such authority as their shining merits may lend to a case so unjust, so feeble, and so cruel as theirs.

Many of the gentlemen on the other side are Christian ministers. They uphold blame and punishment, in direct defiance of the teaching and example of Jesus Christ.

The founder of their religion bade them love their enemies. He taught them that if one stole their coat they should give him their cloak also. He prevented the punishment of the woman taken in adultery, and called upon him without sin to cast the first stone. He asked God to forgive his murderers, because they knew not what they did. In not one of these cases did Christ say a word in favour of punishment nor of blame.

Christians pray to be forgiven, as they forgive; they ask God to "have mercy upon us miserable sinners"; they ask Him to "succour, help, and comfort all that are in danger, necessity, and tribulation," and to "show His pity upon all prisoners and captives"; how, then, can Christians advocate the blame of the weak, and the punishment of the persecuted and unfortunate?

I suggest that men who do not understand their own religion are not likely to understand a religion to which they are opposed.

As I am generally known as a poor man's advocate, I ask you to remember that I am not now appearing for the poor, but for the wrong-doer. There are many very poor who do no serious wrong; there are many amongst the rich, the successful, and the respectable, whose lives are evil.

One does not live half a century without knowing one's world pretty well. I know the honourable and noble lord, full of gout, vainglory, and stealthy vices; I know the fashionable divine, with pride in his heart, milk on his lips, and cobwebs in his brain; I know the smug respectability, with low cunning under his silk hat, and chicanery buttoned up in his irreproachable frock coat; I know the fine lady, beautiful as a poppy, who is haughty from sheer lack of sense; I know the glib orator of mean acts and golden words; I know the elected person of much dignity and little wit, and the woman of much loveliness and little love.

I have to defend men and women whose deeds revolt me, whose presence disgusts me. I have to defend them against the world, and against my own prejudices and aversion. For I also have a heredity and an environment, and therefore crochets, and passions, and antipathies. Though I can defend all victims of heredity and environment, though I can demand justice for the worst, yet my nature loathes the bully and the tyrant, and still more does it loathe the mean: the man of the Judas spirit, who barters children's lives, and women's souls, and the manhood of cities, for dirty pieces of silver. Such a wretch is not to be hated, is not to be punished: he is to be pitied and I am to defend him. But when I think of him my soul is sick. I feel as if a worm had crawled over me. I cannot help this. I cannot endure him. I am not big enough: I lack the grace. I pity him profoundly; but my pity is cold. I pity the devil-fish, and the conger eel; but I could not touch them. They are repulsive to me.

It is very difficult for us to separate the man from his acts. It is very difficult for us to hate and to loathe the acts, without hating and loathing the man. This is the old, old Adam in us, rebelling against the new altruism and the new reason. We are still a long way behind our ideals.

It is no part of my plan to flatter the world. I know you, my brothers and sisters, too well for that. There is a strong family resemblance between us. Your ancestors, also, had tails. And then, like Thoreau, "I know what mean and sneaking lives many of you lead." The majority of you, indeed, are still little better than barbarians. The mass of you waste your lives and starve your souls for the sake of beads and scalps, and flesh and firewater. Your heroes are, too, often, mere prowling appetites, or solemn vanities, ravenous for pudding and praise; mere tailor-made effigies, to stick stars upon, or feathers into; mere painted idols for ignorance to worship; embroidered serene-emptiness for flunkeys to bow down to: kings and things of shreds and patches.

Yes. We are all painfully human, and under a régime of blame and punishment may count ourselves extremely lucky if we have never been found out.

Do not let us stand in too great awe of our ancestors. They also trafficked and junketted in Vanity Fair. The prosecution lay stress upon the universal custom and experience of mankind. The world has never ordered its life by rules of wisdom and understanding. It has paid more court to the rich than to the good, and more heed to the noisy than to the wise. The world has imprisoned as many honest men as rogues, has slain more innocent than guilty, has decorated more criminals than heroes, has believed a thousand times less truth than lies. Is it not so, men and women? Does not common experience support the charge?

Let us, then, understand each other, before we go any farther. The glory of manhood and womanhood is not to have something, but to be something; is not to get something, but to give something; is not to rule but to serve.

The greatness of a nation does not lie in its wealth and power, but in the character of its men and women. With greatness in the people all the rest will follow, as surely as when the greatness of the people wanes the rest will be quickly lost. The history of all great empires tells us this: Japan is just now repeating the lesson.

What is it most men strive for? Wealth and fame. These are prizes for little men, not for big men. They are prizes that often inflict untold misery in the winning, and are nearly always a curse to the winner. Vice and crime are fostered by luxury and idleness on the one hand, and by ignorance and misery on the other hand. The poor are poor that the rich may be rich; and the riches and the poverty are a curse to both.

Consider all the vain pride and barbaric pomp of wealth and fashion, and all the mean envy of the weakly snobs who revere them, and would sell their withered souls to possess them. Is this decorative tomfoolery, are this apish swagger and blazoned snobbery worthy of *men* and *women?*

The powdered flunkeys, the gingerbread coaches, the pantomime processions, the trumpery orders and fatuous titles: are they any nobler or more sensible than the paint, the tom-toms, and the Brummagen jewels of darkest Africa?

And the cost! We are too prone to reckon cost in cash. We are too prone to forget that cash is but a symbol of things more precious. We bear too tamely all the bowing and kow-towing,

all the fiddling and fifing, all the starring and gartering, and befeathering and begemming, all the gambling and racing, the saluting and fanfaring, the marching and counter-marching, all the raking in of dividends, and building up of mansions, all the sweating and rackrenting, all the heartless vanity, and brainless luxury, and gilded vice: we should think of them more sternly did we count up what they cost in men and women and children, what they cost in brawn and brain, and honour and love, what they cost in human souls—what they cost in Bottom Dogs.

Happiness cannot be stolen; nor won by cheating, as though life were a game of cards. The man who would be happy must find his duty, and do it. In no other way can man or woman find real happiness, under the sun. But the world, so far, has quite a different creed. And the common experience, on which the Christians so much depend, is not on the side of the angels. And that is why the Bottom Dogs are so numerous, and why so many of us lead "such mean and sneaking lives."

Descendants of barbarians and beasts, we have not yet conquered the greed and folly of our bestial and barbarous inheritance. Our nature is an unweeded garden. Our hereditary soil is rank. Talk about the trouble of bringing up children: what is that to the trouble of educating one's ancestors? O, the difficulty I have had with mine.

My friends: you have read my statement of the case for the Bottom Dog; you have read the arguments I have used in support of that statement: you have read the evidence, and you have read my answers to the arguments of the other side.

I claim to have proved that all human actions are ruled by heredity and environment, that man is not responsible for his heredity and environment, and that therefore all blame and all punishment are unjust.

I claim to have proved that blame and punishment, besides being unjust are ineffectual.

I claim that the arguments which apply to heredity and environment apply also to the soul, for since man did not create the soul he cannot be responsible for its acts.

I claim to have explained the so-called "mysteries" of conscience, and of the "dual personality," and to have proved them to be the natural action of heredity and environment.

I claim to have proved that morality comes through natural evolution, and not by any kind of super-natural revelation.

I claim to have proved that the argument from universal expe-

rience is fallacious, and to have shown that universal experience has misled us in the manner of human responsibility as in so many other matters.

I claim to have proved that the theory here advocated is based upon justice and reason, and is more moral and beneficient than the Christian religion, under which so much wrong, and waste, and misery continue to exist unchecked and unrebuked.

I claim to have proved that the prosecution do not understand the case, and that their arguments are for the most part mere misrepresentations or misunderstandings of the issues and the facts.

It remains for me now to say a few words as to the wrongs suffered by my unfortunate client; and as to the necessity for so altering the laws and customs of society as to prevent the perpetration of all this cruelty and injustice; of all this waste of human love, and human beauty, and human power.

We are sometimes asked to think imperially: it would be better to think universally. Illiminitable as is the universe, it appears in all its parts to obey the same laws. Its suns may be told by millions; but matter and force compose and rule them all. Carlyle spoke of the contrast between heaven and Vauxhall; but Vauxhall is in the heavens, by virtue of the same law that there holds Canopus and the Pleiades. We think of the dawn-star as of something heavenly pure, and of the earth as grey in sorrow and sin; but the earth is a star—a planet, bright and beautiful as Venus in a purple evening sky.

We gaze with wondering awe at the loveliness and mystery of the Galaxy, that bent beam of glory whose motes are suns, that luminous path of dreams whose jewels are alive; but we forget that Whitechapel, and Oldham, and Chicago, and the Black Country, are in the Milky Way. In that awful ocean of Space are many islands; but they are all akin. In the "roaring loom of time." howsoever the colours may change, the pattern vary, the piece is all one piece; it is knit together, thread to thread. All men are brothers. From the age beyond the Aryans the threads are woven and joined together. *All* of us had ancestors with tails. All the myriads of human creatures, since the first ape stood erect, have been like leaves upon one tree, nourished by the same sap, fed from the same root, warmed by the same sun, washed by the same rains. All our polities, philosophies, and religions, grow out of each other. We can never fully understand any one of them until we know the whole. Comparative anatomy, com-

parative philology, comparative mythology, all comparative sciences, tell us the same story of growth, of evolution, of kinship. Babylon and Egypt, India and Persia, Greece and Rome, Gothland and Scandinavia, Britain and Gaul; Osiris, Krishna, Confucius, Brahma, Zoroaster, Buddha, Christ, Mahomet: all are parts of one whole, all parts related each to other. The oldest nations speak in our languages to-day, the oldest savages survive in our bodies, the oldest gods have part in our religious forms and ceremonies, the oldest superstitions and faults and follies, still obscure our minds and impede our action. We cannot thrust the dead aside and stand alone: the dead are part of us. We cannot take a man and isolate him, and judge and understand him, as though he were a new and special creation. He is of kin to all the living and the dead. He stands one figure in the great human pageant, and cannot be taken out of the picture: cannot be cut out from the background—that background of a thousand ages, and of innumerable women and men. He belongs to the great human family: he, also, is in the Milky Way.

Old families, and noble families are made of parchment or paper: there is but one real family of flesh and blood, and that reaches back to the clot of jelly in the sea, and we all belong to it.

When I hear some little Brick Lane Brother talking about the true faith, as taught in a tin chapel in Upper Tooting, I think of the star-readers of the Aryan hills, of the dead gods, and the obliterated beliefs of ancient conquerors, long since eaten by worms, and of the shrivelled corpse in the museum who has lain grinning in his sandhole for thirty thousand years, amongst his grave pots, and ghost charms, and the uneaten food for the long journey to the great beyond. When I hear honourable members prating in the House about "Imperial questions," I think of the famished seamstress, the unemployed docker, the girl with the phossy jaw, whom the honourable gentleman "represents." When I read of the gorgeous stage-management of the royal pageants, I remember the graves of the Balaclava men, in the Manchester workhouse field, where the sods were spread out level over the neglected dead. When I see beautiful sculptures and paintings of Greek womanhood, I remember how, coming out of the art gallery where I had been looking at the picture of Andromache, I saw a white-haired old Englishwoman carrying a great bag of cinders on her bent old back. When I hear the angelic voices of the choirs, and see the golden plate on cathedral altars, I ask myself questions about that Bridge of Sighs where London women drown themselves in their despair,

and about that child in the workhouse school who tamed a mouse because he must have something to love. When a callow preacher babbles to his grown-up congregation about sin and human nature, I remember the men and women I have known: the soldiers, the navvies, the colliers, the doctors, the lawyers, the authors, the artists; I remember the dancing-rooms in the garrison town, and the girls, and how they were womanly in their degradation, and sweet in spite of their shame; and I wondered what the reverend gentleman would answer them if they spoke to him as they often spoke to me, in words that were straight as blades, and cut as deep.

And often, when I mix with the crowds in the streets, or at the theatre, or in public assemblies, I feel that I am in the presence of the haunted past, and the whole human story unfolds itself to my mind: the primeval savage with "his fell of hair," fighting with other savages, under "branching elm, star-proof"; the Ethiopian warrior in his battle chariot; the bent slave, toiling on the pyramid; the armed knight errant, foraying, and redressing sentimental wrongs; the fearless Viking, crossing oceans in his open galley, to discover continents; the gladiator in the Roman arena; the Greek Stoics, discoursing at the fountain; Drake singeing the King of Spain's beard; St. Francis preaching to the birds; the Buddha, giving his body to the famished tigress; the Aryan at the plough, the Phœnician in his bark, the Californian seeking gold, the whaler amongst the ice, the ancient Briton in his woad—all the mysterious and fascinating human drama of love and hate, of hunger and riches, and laughter and tears, and songs and sobbings, and dancing and drunkenness, and marriage and battle, and heroism and cowardice, and murder and robbery, and the quest of God.

That wonderful human mystery-play, how softly it touches us, how deeply it moves us, with its hum of myriad voices, its vision of white arms, and flashing weapons, and beckoning fingers, and asking looks, and the ripple of its laughter, like the music of hidden streams in leafy woods, and the lisp of its unnumbered feet, and the weird rhythm of its war songs, and the pathos of its joy-bells, and the pity of its follies, and its failures, and its crimes—the pity; "the pity of it, Iago, the pity of it."

Possessed, then by this dreaming habit, this Janus-like bent of mind, I cannot think of the Bottom Dog apart from the whole bloodstained, tearstained tragedy of man's inhumanity to man. For the Bottom Dog is a child of all the ages, he plays his part in a drama whereof the scene is laid in the Milky Way. He

recalls to us the long wavering war between darkness and light, the life and death struggle of the brute to be a man, the painful never-ceasing effort of man to understand.

We cannot look back over that trampled and sanguinary field of history without a shudder; but we must look. It reaches back into the impenetrable mists of time, it reaches forward to our own thresholds, which still are wet with blood and tears, and on every rood of it, in ghastly horror, are heaped the corpses of the men, and women, and children slain by the righteous, in the name of justice, and in the name of God. Though the gods perished, though the vane of justice veered until right became wrong, and wrong right, yet the crimes continued, the horrible mistakes were repeated; the holy, and the noble, and cultivated still cried for their brother's blood, still trampled the infants under their holy feet, still forced the maidens and the mothers to slavery and shame.

Men and women, is it not true?

From fear of ghosts and devils, and for the glory of the gods of India, of Babylon, of Egypt, of Greece, of Rome, of France, of Spain, of England, were not millions tortured, and burnt, and whipped, and hanged, and crucified?

Witchcraft, and heresy, idolatry, sacrifice, propitiation, divine vengeance; what seas of blood, what holocausts of crime, what long-drawn tragedies of agony and bloody sweat do these names not recall? And they were all mistakes! They were all nightmares, born of ignorance and superstition! We have awakened from those nightmares. Our gods no longer lust after human blood. We know that heresy is merely difference of education, that there never was a witch; we know that all those millions wept and bled and died for nothing: that they were tortured, enslaved, degraded and murdered, by the holy, through ignorance, and fear, and superstition.

If we turn from the crimes and blunders of prophets and of priests to the laws of Kings and Parliaments, we find the same ignorance, the same ferocity, the same futility. I could fill a bigger book than mine with the mere catalogue of the punishments and the instruments of torture invented by tyrants, and land-grabbers, and superior persons for the protection of their privileges, and their plunder, and their luxury and ease. For thousands of years the whip, the chain, the rack, the gibbet, and the sword, have been used to uphold the laws made by robbers, and by idlers, and by ambitious lunatics, to punish the "crimes" of the ignorant and the weak.

Men and women, is it not true?

And all the agony and blood and shame were ineffectual. And always blame and punishment bred hate, and savagery, and more crime.

"But it is different to-day." . .

It is the same to-day. The laws to-day are defences of the foolish rich against the ignorant and hungry poor. The laws to-day, like the laws of the past, make more criminals than they punish. The laws keep the people ignorant and poor, and the rich idle and vicious. The laws to-day, as in the day of Isaiah, enable the rich to "add field to field, until the people have no room." The laws to-day sacrifice a thousand innocent children to preserve one useful, lazy, unhappy, superior person. The laws to-day punish as a criminal the child who steals a loaf, or a pair of boots, and honour as a grandee the man whose greed and folly keep the workers off the land, and treble the rents in the filthy and indecent slums where age has no reverence, and toil no ease, and where shame has laid its hand upon the girl child's breast.

What was the old denunciation of those who cried "peace, peace, when there is no peace," and what shall we say of those priests and holy men who cry "morality, morality," where there is no morality, where usury and exploitation are honoured arts: where crime and vice are taught to the children as in a school?

If you sow tares, can you reap wheat? If you sow hate can you reap love? If you sow wrong can you reap right? If you teach and practise knavery, can you ask for purity and virtue?

The laws were made by ignorant and dishonest men, they are administered by men ignorant and selfish; they are dishonest laws; good for neither rich nor poor; evil in their conception, evil in their enforcement, evil in their results.

There need not be any such things as poverty and ignorance in the world. The earth is bounteous, and yields enough, and more than enough, for all.

Men and women: I beg of you to do all that is in your power to change the unjust laws, and the uncharitable and unreasonable opinions, which make the deadly environment that fosters vice and crime.

For, besides that the laws are unjust, that the teachings of our superior persons are untrue, that blame and punishment must fail, as they have always failed, there is the awful *waste*—the waste of life, and love, of beauty and power that the present cruel system entails.

Think of the loveliness of a good woman, the blessing of her; think of the sweetness and the joy of an innocent child, of the value and nobility of an honest man. Picture to yourself the kind of woman you would wish your daughter to be, the kind of man you would wish your son to be. Then remember what good or bad environment can make of the young.

I tell you there is hardly a battered drab, a broken pauper, a hardened thief, a hopeless drunkard, a lurking tramp, a hooligan, but who might have been an honest and a useful citizen under fair conditions.

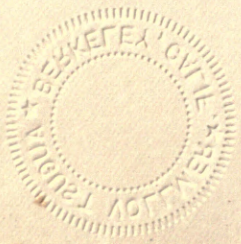
Good women: if ever you felt the thrill of a dear child's fingers on your throat or breast, think what millions of such children in our cities must become.

Good men: if you honour womanhood, if you love your daughters and your wives, think of the women and the girls in the streets, in the fields, in the factories, and in the jails, and then look into your mirrors for a friend to save them.

Men and women: as the little children are now the ruffian and the harlot once were; as the ruffian and the harlot are now millions of helpless children must become unless you give them sympathy and aid.

It is no use looking for help to heaven: we must look upon the earth. It is no use asking God to help us: we must help ourselves.

My friends: for the sake of good men, who are better than their gods; for the sake of good women, who are the pride and glory of the world; for the sake of the dear children, who are sweeter to us than the sunshine or the flowers; for the sake of the generation not yet spoiled or lost; for the sake of the nations yet unborn; in the names of justice, of reason and truth, I ask you for a verdict of Not Guilty.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